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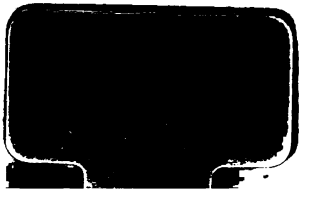

THE CHRISTIAN WARRIOR.

L. AND G. SEELEY, THAMES DITTON, SURREY.

THE CHRISTIAN WARRIOR

WRESTLING WITH

SIN, SATAN, THE WORLD AND THE FLESH.

BY THE LATE

REV. ISAAC AMBROSE.

ABRIDGED, METHODIZED, AND IMPROVED, BY THE

REV. THOMAS JONES,

OF CREATON, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.

"AND THERE WAS WAR IN HEAVEN, MICHAEL AND HIS ANGELS FOUGHT AGAINST THE DRAGON; AND THE DRAGON FOUGHT, AND HIS ANGELS."—REV. XII. 7.

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ADDRESS TO CHRISTIAN WARRIORS.

SOLDIERS of Christ, be aware that you are highly advanced in God's creation, that you occupy an important station, that you have an arduous work allotted to you, and that you have neither time nor talent to throw away. For you are enlisted under the banner of Christ, you have entered the armies of the Most High, and have taken the oath of allegiance to the King of Sion, and bound yourselves by an oath, to fight the good fight of faith, against sin, Satan, the world and the flesh. What formidable enemies are these! You have to encounter all the powers of hell, and their name is Legion. Fight them you now must, for you have put on the armour, and taken the field to fight all the enemies of God and man. When you survey the enemies' camp, and see their strength, their number, their stratagems, and inveterate malice; and are then made to feel your own weakness and nothing-

ness, you tremble, and say, How shall I go against these mighty hosts! Yet I must conquer them all, or die an eternal death. O soldiers of Christ! banish all your guilty fears. There is, after all, far more for you than against you. You are on the Lord's side, who fighteth for you. He is your refuge and strength, your sun and shield. He is with you in the field, to teach your hands to war, and to cover your head in the day of battle, and hath promised you the victory. If God be for you, who is he that can overcome you, and put you to death, when you are hid in the Lord's pavilion, and surrounded with the wall of salvation? While in the heat of the battle, be filled with the hope of victory, and feel assured, that you shall finally obtain a complete and glorious conquest over all that come against you; for hath not the Captain of your salvation engaged to subdue Satan and all his armies, shortly under your feet? Trust him, and take courage, then, you cannot meet with disappointment, "for faithful is he that promised, who also will do it." With a view to strengthen your hope of victory, keep in mind that you have not an enemy, difficulty, or danger to encounter, but which has been already conquered and subdued for you, by the great Captain of your salvation. And the countless millions of his soldiers,

who are now arrived safe in glory, singing the song of Moses and the Lamb, were once here below, wrestling with all the enemies and difficulties which you now have to encounter. Only war a good warfare, then, and rest assured, that he who carried them safe through the war, will carry you also to the triumphs of the world to come. Not one of all his true soldiers was ever left to perish on the field of battle. Put on courage, ye Christian Warriors! fight the good fight of faith, be faithful unto death, and then, your Captain will release you from the war, and give you the crown of life, which you shall for ever wear, in honour of your gracious Lord and Saviour.

T. J.

THE CHRISTIAN WARRIOR.

PART I.

"*We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.*"—Eph. vi. 12.

CHAPTER I.

STATEMENT OF THE DOCTRINES TO BE HANDLED.

I. All the people of God must be *warriors.*
II. We have powerful and malicious *enemies* to contend with.
III. We must *wrestle* and strive hard against them.

I.—*All God's people must be* IN THE WAR.

1. The *wicked* refuse to engage in this war. Instead of fighting the Lord's battles, they take up arms on the enemy's side. They spend their time in chamber-

ing and wantonness, in idleness and carnal security. They are altogether ignorant of Satan's assaults, and of their own danger. Oh that their eyes were opened to see their perilous condition! Oh that such men knew their danger in time to escape it! They are not the Lord's soldiers, but the devil's revellers. They will not fight against Satan, and Satan will not disturb their sleep. So they are in covenant with death and hell.

All the people of God, from first to last, are, and must be *engaged* in this spiritual warfare, and can say, we do not war after the flesh, the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds. Such has been the language of the saints in all ages; they were all in the war, even the most holy of them all. Job, Moses and Aaron, Lot and David: the Patriarchs and the Prophets: all had their fiery trials. And so those under the gospel: Peter was winnowed,—Paul was buffeted, and even Christ himself was led of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

Remarks.

Must all God's people war with devils? Then consider what religion will cost you. The christian soldier must endure hardness. Saints must be winnowed, buffeted, tried and tempted. Wars and dangers shall be their portion. And through much tribulation must they enter into the kingdom of God. See how Paul is in labours, in stripes, in prisons, in deaths. He was always in perils, wherever he went.

Christianity will cost you much here, and save you for ever. Then be a christian, that you may be a conqueror.

Are we to fight against sin and Satan, the world and the flesh? then, *courage!* christians! Be not dismayed. Are you afraid of these formidable enemies? Go forth in the strength of the Lord God, and he will put all your enemies shortly under your feet. Satan's fiery darts and all your trials shall do you good, and be to you as the waves to the ark, as the whale to Jonah, as the file that brightens the iron, as the mill that grinds the wheat, or as the fire that separates the dross from the gold. Do you not feel your spirits sharpened, your pride subdued, your flesh cooled, and every lust mortified, and every grace invigorated, by these temptations and trials? Tell me, are not you roused to make earnest and ardent prayers, by these wars and conflicts? Are not Satan's temptations like bellows to blow the fire of devotion in your soul, and like a hedge of thorns to keep you from going astray? Oh vain men! be not afraid of the war, but enlist into the armies of Christ, and fight valiantly under the banner of the cross. It is an honourable war, Christ invites you to it, and promiseth to cover your head in the day of battle, and to crown you in the end. And what more would you have? "Put on the whole armour of God, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might," and he is engaged to give you the victory.

II. *We have powerful and malicious* ENEMIES *to contend with.*

1. We wrestle not with *flesh and blood,* i. e. not with men, but with devils; not with feeble frail mortals like ourselves; but with mighty hosts of spiritual adversaries, with Satan at their head. The main contest is not with the corruptions of our nature, but with principalities and powers, with Beelzebub and his legions.

We have indeed *within us* hosts of busy and injurious enemies; and these are often "like the sons of Zeruiah, too hard for us." "Within are fightings;" the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and often brings us into captivity to the law of sin." We often groan, earnestly longing to be delivered from this body of sin and death. These inward sins in our souls and bodies are very formidable enemies, if there were no other.

Christians! how doth it concern you to stand upon your *watch tower!* You have enemies within you. If a city was besieged by foreign armies, would the citizens harbour traitors within their walls?—nay, would they not put them to death, for their own safety? You have within you a host of treacherous enemies, and these seek all occasions to betray you into the devil's hands. Is it not high time for us all to mortify the flesh with its affections and lusts, and to implore the aid and assistance of God's Spirit, to mortify our bosom traitors and murderers? These are in some respects more dangerous than the devil himself, because they are

within us. They open the door to let the enemy in. Satan can do nothing, till your bosom sins betray you into his hands. He can never force you to sin, but must first gain your consent. Oh, then, how carefully should you watch over your own hearts, and live in prayer!

2. Our formidable enemies are, "principalities, powers, rulers of darkness, and spiritual wickednesses." A few words for each term, to shew what we have to contend with.

PRINCIPALITIES.—Much more than all princes,—Satan rules over all the earth, and is called "the god of this world." "The earth indeed is the Lord's," and "the Most High ruleth over the kingdoms of men." Yet Satan has now the dominion over the world in its *corrupted* state. When the world left God, then God, in judgment, gave Satan his dominion over it, and gave him leave to rule over all the wicked. And thus Satan rules over all the children of disobedience, and his dominion is here called, "principalities."

POWERS.—They are princes, with mighty power: we cannot tell how great the power of Satan is. When God permits him, he makes a wonderful display of his power in all creation, over all the elements. He has power over *fire*. He can cause thunders and lightnings in the firmament, and set the heavens on fire. He has power over the *air*. "He is the prince of the power of the air." It was he that caused the mighty wind from the wilderness to fall upon Job's house, and kill his children. Without God's permission, he cannot make a breath of air to

blow, but with permission he can at any time raise wind enough to remove mountains. Satan has power over *water*. He can hurl the sea into such commotion, that the depth shall boil like a pot. Satan has power over the *earth*, and can cause earthquakes to swallow up towns and cities, rocks and rivers.

Satan can enter into the bodies of *beasts*. A legion of devils entered into an herd of two thousand swine, and hurried them violently over a precipice into the sea, and drowned them. And they have no less power over the bodies of *men*. Read of the lunatics, the deaf and the dumb, which were healed of Christ, when on earth. And did they not carry the body of Christ himself through the air?

And what mighty power the devil has over the *souls* of men! He can work on the *understanding*, and cause thousands of evil thoughts to arise there, to our sorrow, by working on the corruptions which he finds in the soul. The devil can do great mischief in the *will* of men. Though he cannot command and determine it, yet he can persuade and allure it to a thousand evils. Satan works on the *affections and passions* of men. He deals much with our imaginations, paints sinful objects as lovely and desirable, and so kindles our affections towards them, till the consent of the will is obtained, and the soul is led captive.

RULERS, of the darkness of this world.—The *darkness* of this world is the seal of Satan's empire. His *time* is, during this world. He began with Adam in Paradise, and will continue to rule, till time is no more. At the end of the world, he shall be shut up as a close prisoner in hell.

Satan's *dominion* is in the earth and the air. In heaven the devils rebelled, and were cast out, and now they rule in the earth and in the air. Here they seduce and destroy the souls of men as fast as they can. Woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth, who dwell among such enemies. Yet let the saints rejoice, no enemies shall be in heaven to torment us. This may well make us long to change earth for heaven. Soldiers in bloody wars cannot but long earnestly for victory, and to be released from the war, and enjoy peace. Like the mariners who being tossed on the boisterous sea, naturally long for the haven of rest and safety; so must the soldiers of Christ ardently long for the promised victory over their spiritual adversaries, and to land on the shore of eternal rest. Oh, Christians! press on towards heaven; for the earth is full of snares and plots of Satan, who tries to take, and to ruin you for ever.

SPIRITUAL WICKEDNESS.—Oh! what enemies are these! We have to wrestle with evil spirits, which are full of subtilty, full of malice, and full of power to hurt and to destroy. These can attack us in all conditions, and in all places, when we see them not. They are not only spirits, but *evil* spirits, full of malice. Satan is more than wicked, he is maliciously wicked. His constant trade and greatest delight is to allure men to hell, to be tormented for ever. The devils tempt us, not only to outward transgressions, but also to spiritual sins, such as pride, hypocrisy, unbelief, and blasphemy.

Satan fights with the people of God, not about the *things of earth*, such as gold mines, lands, and treasures,

but about heavenly things, such as our salvation and happiness in Christ, and meetness for glory. He strives to rob us of our God, our Redeemer, our Sanctifier and Comforter, and to allow us nothing but sin and misery, guilt, condemnation, and torments. Such are the enemies which we have to contend with, and which must be conquered, or we are undone for ever.

Remarks.

Are devils thus mighty and malicious? Then it is high time to lay to heart the work you have to do, i. e. to contend with, and to subdue these formidable enemies. Bless God that you are not already destroyed by them. Should the Lord let them loose, what work would they do in the earth! They would rend the heavens, shake the earth, and destroy all mankind, in an instant. My brethren, you should not dread them too much, for God is your refuge and strength. Neither must you slight them, for no mere creature on earth can stand before them. Oh, bless God for the restraints he lays upon Satan!

Are devils so mighty and malicious? Then let all tempted souls *flee to God,* and rely on his strength, who governs heaven, earth, and hell. Let the righteous flee under the wings of the Almighty, where they shall find a safe shelter in every time of danger. "The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteou · runneth into it, and is safe."

III.—*On* WRESTLING *with these enemies.*

1. This combat is called *wrestling*, because Satan does not fight with us at a distance, but comes into close struggle. He closeth in with us, yea, gets within us, and lays hold on the heart. Other enemies may lay hold on our bodily limbs, but Satan is a spirit, and lays hold on our spirits, and all the powers of our mind; and nothing can escape his fangs.

It is called wrestling, because it is *violent*. Wrestling is not an easy, idle work, but requires strength, skill, and vigour. Satan deals with us as a roaring lion, and strives to destroy our souls. Then striving earnestly is necessary on our part, that we may not become his prey. Oh, brethren, "be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might," that you may escape hell, and take heaven by violence. We must not dally with such an enemy, but resist unto blood.

We must wrestle, because of the many *arts and tricks* which the enemy will use against us. He is a very cunning wrestler, and conquers by art as well as by strength. He has thousands of artful stratagems. He has also numberless plots formed in secret, and has the experience of thousands of years, so that he knows well how to take advantage of us, and assail us unawares. And should not we study his arts and wiles, so that we may "not be ignorant of his devices?" Soldier, keep your armour on, go forth in the strength of the Lord, and no enemy can prevail against you.

We must wrestle, because Satan has his *seconds* to

fight on his side; the world and the flesh are his chief captains. The world presents its golden apples to tempt us; then the flesh lays hold on the bait, and we are drawn away from God. When Satan sees a fit time, he threatens us with poverty and distress; he turns all smiles into frowns; instead of honours and riches, he sets before us nothing but darkness and distress, and we know how terrible these are to our frail nature. So the subtle enemy vanquisheth some by prosperity, and others by adversity. Few come off conquerors. Let those of us that are true warriors take courage, for we have God on our side, and Christ is the captain of our salvation. Likewise the angels of God encamp round about the saints. What a comfort is this, that we have the angels of God, and the God of angels for our defence! There are more for us than can come against us; and this will secure to us the victory.

Remarks.

1. Of *terror* to the wicked.

Is our spiritual combat a hard wrestling? Then woe to the wicked, who never wrestle at all. Let them know that they are not the Lord's soldiers, but the devil's revellers. As they are his captives, he lets them alone to take their sleep quietly. "When the strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace;" but when Christ comes to dispossess him, there will be a great struggle, and many a battle fought. Woe be to them that are at ease in Zion! Can we be God's servants, and not his soldiers? Is not Christ's Church on earth truly militant? The saints are warriors, as

well as travellers. Oh then, what is their condition, who sleep in the arms of death! They will not even resist Satan, but go where he leads them. They lie down in carnal security, and dream of heaven, till they find themselves in the torments of hell. The enemy hath already secured them in his net, and now hath nothing more to do, but to drag them from their bed of slumbers, and cast them into the deep.

2. *Encouragement* to the warriors.

Is our spiritual combat a *wrestling*? Then courage, Christians! "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." The Christian above all men, needs courage. A cowardly spirit unfits us for the lowest duty. It is the valiant that takes heaven by a holy violence. The soldiers of Christ must have an heroic spirit, and dare to be holy in spite of men and devils. Sinners are bold, and shall saints be timid? The one resolves to be wicked, and shall the other be wavering in his holy course? Hell keeps the field impudently, with displayed banners of open profaneness, and shall saints hide themselves for shame? Oh let this never be the case with the armies of the living God.

Take *courage*, therefore, O ye saints, "and be strong." When Joshua was to march before Israel into Canaan, the Lord would raise his spirits with saying, "Be strong, be of good courage." So would I say to every man of grace, "Be strong, and of good courage." "Be not dismayed, for the Lord thy God is with thee, whithersoever thou goest." So he saith to you who march through the wilderness to the heavenly Canaan, Be full of faith, for the Lord is with thee: what, if devils fly in your face, and grap-

ple with you hand to hand? Any feeble David may wrestle with Goliah, so long as the battle is the Lord's; and the warrior comes to the field in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel.

Is your spiritual combat a wrestling? come then, and *play the man.* Here are legions of devils ready to devour. See them coming speedily and furiously against you, determined to destroy soul, body, and spirit. What will you do now? will you turn your back and fly? Shall Satan conquer without a struggle? Oh no; stand to your arms, and bid him defiance—resist him, and he will flee from you. But he will come again.

3. MOTIVES to continue the war.

There is a *necessity* for it. Either you must wrestle with the enemy, or be taken captive by him. Shall not this necessity make you fight? Necessity would make cowards fight, and shall you, a soldier of Christ, lay down your arms in despair? Only wrestle in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the victory is sure. When Christ resisted Satan, he fled away, and left him. Resist him, and he will flee from you also. Satan is a conquered enemy; Christ conquered him for you, and he will conquer him by you, when you fight in his name.

The *sweetness of victory* will abundantly repay for the trouble of wrestling. While the wicked think of the sweetness of sin, and the trouble of wrestling, let the Christian think of the fruits of victory over sin, death and hell; he will then earnestly, and voluntarily strive to obtain this glorious conquest. The war is only for time, the victory is for eternity.

The combat is *lawful and just*, appointed of God. It is he that bids us to put on the armour, and take the field against our spiritual adversaries. The Lord warns us, that Satan comes against us as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, and bids us to resist him steadfastly in the faith. You see, brethren, that your cause is just, and you have God's authority for engaging in it—you are God's property, by creation, redemption, and self-dedication—Satan is an usurper, that can have no right to you. In fighting Satan, you do but defend your own right, and the dominion of God in your own souls; your cause is just and good; then fight and conquer.

You have already in *baptism* taken a military Sacrament, and there vowed that you would continue God's faithful soldiers and servants unto your lives' end. What! my brethren, shall you take press-money to serve in God's wars, against the devil and all that help him, and now run away from your colours? A sworn enemy to sin and Satan should never turn his back on those who seek his life. Keep your oath in mind, and resist even unto blood, and unto death.

The Lord *measureth* your temptations, and weigheth your strength: he gives the shoulders, and fitteth the burden, and will never lay on you more than he will enable you to bear. As thy day is, so shall thy strength be. Souls are apt to complain and say, the devil is mighty, and his temptations strong; while I am feeble and foolish. How then can I stand in the wars? Remember, that all your conflicts are weighed in the balance, and God saith unto Satan, "hither-

to shalt thou go, and no further." No doubt but Satan would destroy you at once, but God restrains him, and saith of you as he did of Job, "touch not his life." God sets bounds to Satan, and gives strength to his people. Then let them fight on and take courage.

The Lord hath promised his *presence* with you, on the field of battle, not only as a looker on, but as a protector, by weakening the power of the enemy, and increasing your strength. During the encounter, God will enfeeble the arm of the enemy, and confound his plans. He will, at the same time, give you the skill of a warrior, and cover your head in the day of battle. In this way, the soldiers of Christ are made more than conquerors, by having the Lord on their side—Christians are indeed foiled now and then; but their Lord restores them, and renews their strength, by putting underneath them the everlasting arms.

In addition to all this, God hath provided for you a complete and *impenetrable armour*. This armour is the girdle of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, the sword of the Spirit, and prayer in the spirit. In other words, this holy armour is to have all the graces of the Holy Spirit in lively exercise. Having this armour on, we shall be able to stand in the evil day, against the wiles of the devil, and to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. But recollect that all the virtue of this armour, wholly depends upon God alone. Without Christ, every part of the armour would be broken to pieces with one stroke of our adversary. But while fighting in the whole armour of God, none has ever

yet lost the field. Oh what encouragement is this unto us!

As the victory is sure to all who are clad with the armour of God, so the *reward* is truly great. Jesus promiseth to give them life eternal; to eat of the tree of life; to feed on the heavenly manna; and to give them the crown of life, and to reign with himself for ever. We do not contend for counterfeits, but for crowns; not for temporal crowns, but for the crown of life, which fadeth not away. The crown of conquerors endures for ever.

Wrestlers shall finally *triumph*. When? In the day of judgment—they who now serve Satan, and refuse to wrestle against him, shall in the end be led in triumph by him down to hell. But to you who fight the Lord's battles, the day is coming, when you shall march in triumph with Christ into glory, and shall see your enemies no more for ever. When Christ, with the countless multitudes which have conquered through the blood of the Lamb, shall mount the throne of glory, what triumphant hallelujahs will fill the arch of heaven! O my brethren, where is your courage gone? Where is your ambition? Set your hearts, not on mean and dying things; but on crowns and kingdoms: on glorious victories, and eternal triumphs. Amen.

4. The *victory certain* to the saints.

God is on the side of all true wrestlers, "And if God be for them, who can prosper against them?" Let this animate your soul to go forward, and expect to conquer—Do you fear that you are in Satan's hands? know that Satan is in God's hands. If you

are God's soldier, then he will never suffer you to be overcome by his inveterate enemy. Has God armed you with heavenly armour to fight his battles? Oh then, he will never suffer you to be vanquished, but will fortify you with his own strength, and cover your head in the day of battle. God said of Jerusalem in the time of danger, "I will be unto her a wall of fire round about her." Surely Jerusalem is safe enough now within such a wall! The same wall is around all the saints, every one of them, and therefore they must needs be all invincible. If your shelter were stones, these might be battered: were it walls of lead, these might be melted—were your defence, waters, these might be dried up—were it an army of men, these might lose their lives—but you are guarded with such a defence as cannot be demolished. You have a wall of fire round about you for your defence, and for the destruction of your enemies,—this fire is terrible to God's enemies. Look at Sodom burning, and look at the tremendous conflagration in the last day, when the heavens and the earth shall be one lake of fire—even then, the soldiers of Christ shall be safe in their high tower. Then courage, Christians! God Almighty is a wall of fire round about you by day and by night; in life and in death.

Jesus Christ is your *captain*, who is mightier than all your enemies. He hath already so bruised the serpent's head, that he cannot finally overcome the least of his followers. Satan, as a strong man, kept his palace in peace; but Christ, who is stronger than he, hath robbed him of all his armour. Remember, that the king of Sion is the captain of your salvation,

and will not you fight under the banner of such a King? When you wrestle, he stands by, and will take care to bring you off with honour. Are not you his redeemed people, the children of his family, and members of his body? then he is sure to defend and protect you in all your conflicts. He lived and died for you, in order to deliver you out of the hands of your enemies, and will he now suffer them to devour you? No. He will subdue them all under your feet. Christ knows by experience, what fiery darts, and fierce encounters mean. He will therefore succour those that are tempted. He has bowels of mercy to feel for them, and an arm of power to deliver them. The Lord Jesus not only feels deeply, but prays earnestly, for his children, when they wrestle with their grand adversary. No sooner does Satan run in upon you, but Christ runs into the bosom of the Father, to intercede for you, and there pleads his atoning blood and covenant engagement in your behalf; and him the Father heareth always. Oh the love of Christ,—it passeth knowledge! Trust in him, and banish fear.

The *Spirit of God* will strengthen you against the power of the evil spirit. He will attend you as the spirit of wisdom and understanding, to counsel and strengthen you: to bear you up, and help your infirmities. He will be with you to kindle your love to Christ, and faith in his name. He will stay with you to comfort your heart, and to keep down your unbelieving fears. If you are a true warrior, the Spirit of God will inspire your soul with courage; will give you patience to endure, and will comfort you with the

hope of victory over sin, Satan, death, hell and the grave. O glorious victory! it is worth striving for. Then go on, Christian, fight the good fight of faith, be faithful unto death, and the Captain of your salvation will give unto you the crown of life.

You have, moreover, a host of *mighty angels* to guard you through the war in safety. The angels are ministering spirits, to minister unto the heirs of salvation. God gives them charge concerning the children of his grace, to be around their path by day, and their beds by night. We have reason to believe, that they ward off many a fiery dart aimed by Satan at the saint. What strong motives are these, to fight the Lord's battles! We have God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, with legions of angels on our side. What higher honour? what greater safety can we possibly have! How should this animate our heartsfor the war, and fill us with the hope of victory over all our enemies.

We may also fancy, that the *spirits of just men* made perfect, are now looking at those warriors which are yet on the bloody field of battle, in close combat with the enemy, and take deep interest in their safety and success. We can suppose, that they are now addressing the combatants in some such language as this: "Though your conflict be severe, it cannot be long; the God that gave us the victory over the very same enemies as you now encounter, will assuredly crown you also with victory. Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, and you shall soon arrive where we now are, praising him who brought us safely through, and crowned us with final victory."

Remember also, that all your *brethren* throughout

the world are engaged in the same warfare with yourselves. They are all wrestling, and all in the fire of temptation. You march in the midst of a gallant army: all of them children of the King of kings. These warriors encourage you, and you should encourage them. Every stroke and wound you give to the enemy is a joy to your fellow-soldiers, and every time you are foiled is to them a grief. Then see that you play the man as a valiant warrior.

Christians, be *not afraid* of Satan; he is only a creature of limited power. Is he potent?—your Captain is omnipotent. Is he in armour?—Christ can easily disarm him. He is a creature under a curse. Nothing weakens the power of a creature like God's curse. Let this encourage those that are under God's blessing and protection. Satan is a wounded and a conquered creature. Our Saviour hath conquered Satan for us, "and he will subdue him shortly under our feet." You may now come and set your feet on his neck. Courage, Christians! the great Captain of your salvation hath deprived the strong man of his armour, and hath spoiled principalities and powers for you. It was for us Christ fought our enemies, and for us he conquered. Satan is a chained, cursed creature. Think of this, Christians. The devils can do nothing till God permits them; no, not so much as to enter into an herd of swine. Believe this, and fight, confident of victory. Our greatest enemy is wholly in the power of our best friend, and father; then of whom shall we be afraid, when God fighteth for us? Now, brethren, we see the motives and encouragements we have to fight the Lord's battles.

PART II.

IN our Christian warfare, some *directions* are necessary how we are to manage our spiritual combat: for we have subtle and powerful enemies to contend with. We should know these two things in particular: how the enemy assails us, and how we should defend ourselves. I shall here give the best information I can. I shall endeavour to shew how we are assaulted by our spiritual adversary—in our infancy—in youth—in the time of conversion—in our riper years—and at the close of life. We should be acquainted with his several methods at each period, and how to resist and overcome him. May the Lord direct me how to write, and you to profit by what you read.

CHAPTER I.

IN OUR INFANCY.

I.—*Satan works on the* INFANT MIND.

There can be little doubt but the devil works *on sin* wherever he finds it. He finds it in human nature,

as soon as we are in possession of that nature. We were conceived and born in sin, children of wrath, in Satan's kingdom. The dragon stands ready to devour the child as soon as it is born. "I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me," must be the language of every child of man; therefore Satan puts in his claim, and tries to corrupt them, by stirring up in them all evil tempers and passions, such as peevishness, discontent, anger, pride, jealousy, and revenge, &c. This he does in order to strengthen these evil tempers in their nature, to fit and prepare them for his service, when they are of age to commit sins knowingly. Children have in their very nature the seed of every sin, and as they grow, sin grows in them. As long as they continue out of *Christ*, Satan dwells in them and reigns in them.

How does this enemy *deal with Infants*? "While he keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace." He lets them obey their evil propensities quietly, that they may grow in strength. None have so much to fear from Satan as the children of godly parents, knowing, as he does, that many prayers are offered up for these. He knows that such parents bewail the sinful nature of their children, and dedicate them earnestly to their God and Saviour in the ordinance of baptism. This kindles his malice, and he doubtless would soon destroy them, if God allowed it. However, so long as they continue dead in sin, he knows that they are within his dominion, ready to serve him, until they are made partakers of Christ, at whatever age that may be. For the comfort of pious parents I would say, that there can be no doubt of the salvation of those

that die in infancy. How they are made partakers of Christ is an unexplained mystery; but this we know, "that of such is the kingdom of heaven."

II.—*The* DUTY OF PARENTS *here.*

They have here cause for bitter *lamentation*, for that their child is born into the world, in a state of sin, a child of wrath, having a soul defiled and polluted all over. Pious parents take this to heart, and say, "the corruptions which we have derived from our parents, we have communicated to our children; we have made our little ones, as soon as they were born, vassals to Satan!" Sin, like a black river of poison, flows from Adam, through one generation after another, to the end of the world.

Parents should earnestly *pray* for their infants. If parents have truly devoted themselves to God, he hath promised to receive their children into his favour. The promise is made to them, and to their children. Plead this promise in faith, and say, "O God, thou hast graciously received me into thy covenant, I pray thee to receive my children also, and make them thy children by adoption and grace, so that they may inherit glory with thee for ever."

Parents should devote their children early to God in *baptism*, the ordinance which he has appointed. If you put your children in his arms, he will most assuredly bless them. Say, 'Lord, the children which thou hast given unto us, we give to thee again; receive and seal them for thine own, until the day of redemption.' You would think it an honour, were

your children born into the world heirs of a large earthly estate. How much greater honour to be born of God, heirs of the kingdom of heaven. No wonder that Theodosius gloried more in being called a Christian, than in being an emperor. How earnest, then, should all parents be with God, praying him to make their children Christians.

III.—*The* DUTY OF CHILDREN *here.*

When children are of age to reflect, let them bewail the *sin of their nature*, and say, "I am a child of Adam, born in sin, and of sinful parents. I came into life in a polluted state, and went astray from the womb. I have lived ever since in a condemned state. How very merciful has God been, in sparing my life, when I deserved to be sent into hell! I am ready to say,' Oh, that I never had been born! Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of sin and death."

Many are apt to mourn for actual transgressions, and think but little of *original sin*, which is the source of all sin, and began the controversy between God and man. Surely the horrible nature of this root and parent of all sins is not well understood. This sin cries aloud to God, day and night, for vengeance against the whole race of man, and it is of God's mercy that they are not all consumed.

Let children plead the *covenant* of God with their pious parents, and say, "Lord, remember thy gracious promise to our parents, of being a God to them and to their seed after them; we are their seed, for whom

they offered up many prayers. Let those prayers which thou hast entered on the records of heaven, now come down in blessings on our heads, that we may be the children of thy grace, and loyal subjects of thy kingdom.

Let baptized children seek the *true baptism*. The baptism of the heart, the "inward and invisible grace." Plead hard for deliverance out of Satan's kingdom wherein you were born, and say, 'Satan lays claim to me, and pleads hard that I am one of his subjects; Lord, break my bands, and rescue me out of his slavery. Lord, I feel that I am full of the leprosy of sin, defiled and polluted in my very nature. Come, Lord Jesus, and lead me to the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness. There may I be washed, till I shall be without spot or wrinkle.'

Let the baptized *keep their baptismal vows*, of fighting against sin, Satan, the world and the flesh. Let them wage war against them all, under the banner of the King of Sion. Let them fight for their Master's kingdom. The vow in baptism is a most solemn vow; but you have often broken it. As soon as you could talk, you made a wrong use of your tongue; and, instead of fighting against your spiritual enemies, you have served them all. Repent, and renew your covenant engagements with your God.

CHAPTER II.

TEMPTATIONS IN TIME OF CONVERSION.

This is the *second* period of Satan's assault, when we are born again of the Spirit, which generally takes place in time of youth, from twelve to thirty years of age.—In handling this, I shall observe these two points.—viz. 1. Satan's assaults. 2. Our duties in resisting.

I.—*Satan's assaults, at* CONVERSION.

Youth, most commonly, is the time of conversion. This is the opinion of our most eminent divines, many of whom might easily be mentioned. Some, it is true, return to God, at every period of life, from childhood to old age; but generally speaking, conversion takes place in youth, while they are under instruction. Were there more catechising, and stricter watch over the youth, there would be more conversions: for this of all others, is the most favourable period of life to impress the heart with religious sentiments.—While children are incapable of judging for themselves, the parents are answerable for them, and bound to instruct them in soul concerns; but when children are of age to judge for themselves, the parents who have done their duty are free, and the children must answer for themselves. When the son of

a Jew was full thirteen, the father called ten Jews to witness that his son was duly taught all that the law and customs required, and that his son must from henceforth take care of himself in spiritual concerns, and prayed that he might live long, and walk in the right way.—When the instructed children of christians arrive at fourteen years of age, they bring them to be confirmed by the bishop, and there to take their baptismal vow upon themselves, and so far to free their parents.

Oh how good it is for a man to *bear the yoke* in his youth! It must be borne at one time or another. No time so advantageous every way, as in the days of youth. How very blessed it would be to come early into the kingdom of Christ, and enlist under the banner of the cross against all spiritual enemies. God hath engaged to be the God of those "who seek him early."—Satan knows all this full well, and therefore sets a stricter watch over the season of youth than any. He observes most narrowly all the actings of God's Spirit upon them. And if he sees any appearance of their leaving his service and turning to fight against his kingdom, he instantly prepares for battle. He is ready with his fiery darts of ten thousand temptations to throw them down who try to throw down his kingdom. Now my young man, what will you do? You must fight Satan, or die the death.

II.—*The* OCCASION *of Satan's first and furious assaults.*

He was *quiet* while he could keep his house

in peace; but now when the sinner begins to be uneasy about his salvation, the enemy begins to rage. The sinner was lately at some sermon, or read some good book, or heard some glad tidings about Christ, that he is come into the world to rescue captive souls from the devil's power. He has heard the Saviour proclaiming liberty to the captives and salvation to the lost, and saying, that if any heavy-laden sinner was weary of the devil's government, he would take him under his protection, and save him from God's wrath, sin's dominion, and Satan's malice.—On hearing such glad tidings as these, the poor sinner is brought to consider seriously what he had best do, and how to act.

Consideration is the first step towards repentance. The prodigal first came to himself before he came to his father. He considered with himself what a starving condition he was in, feeding on husks, when there was plenty of bread in his father's house. Why then should I perish with hunger, said he, "I will arise and go to my father." He did so, and was kindly received.—It is usual with penitents to begin with considering their misery and danger. 'Am I Satan's vassal?—Shall I continue in his kingdom?—Is not the sweet government of Christ a thousand times better than the tyranny of Satan?—And is not the reward of Jesus, a thousand thousand times better than the devil's wages?—What! is not heaven better than hell? And did not I promise to fight under the banner of Christ against sin, Satan, the world, and the flesh?—How is it then, that I still serve these my enemies, and suffer myself to be taken captive by Satan at his will and pleasure?—What if I were to

die this night, in this state? What would become of me to all eternity?—Could I be content to lose God, and Christ and the joys above, and to dwell with devils and reprobates, and all those infernal fiends in the bottomless pit?—Consider, Oh my soul, and think most seriously on these weighty and everlasting concerns. As you die, so must you remain for ever and ever.' When the sinner comes to have such considerations as these, the devil is alarmed, lest he should lose his prey, and makes haste to beset the soul with such temptations as the following:—

III.—*Temptations from Satan* HIMSELF.

1. He tries to *remove* pious thoughts, which lead to holiness. He saith, what do these strangers here? How came these intruders into my house, to disturb my dwelling? Are these fit companions for the soul, where I bear rule? Away with them, shut them out of doors, for I cannot endure them within my territories.

2. The enemy *injects* wicked thoughts into men's minds, instead of good. These are the darts which he throws into the soul at pleasure. He constantly employs the mind as far as he can. He strives to keep the soul from having one thought of heaven, or of hell, from one end of the week to the other. He finds him constant employ. The sinner grinds, and he is filling the hopper, that the mill may not stand still. He is with the sinner as soon as he awakes in the morning, and injects evil into his heart throughout the day, and at night, like a careful jailor, locks him up, and keeps him from all good thoughts.

Remarks.

Before I proceed, I shall propose three *questions*.

1. Does Satan *know our thoughts?*—I answer, So long as they are simply the inward thoughts of our hearts, he cannot know them. "Thou, Lord, only knowest the hearts of the children of men." 2 Chron. vi. 30.—But we too commonly discover our inmost thoughts to the enemy by the workings of some of the passions and dispositions of the soul or body, or both.

2. Can Satan keep *good thoughts from entering* into our minds?—All the unregenerate are in his kingdom, and under his control and dominion, "He worketh in the children of disobedience, and leads them captive at his will." He so fills their hearts with evil thoughts, that no good thoughts have room to enter. —He does the same with the regenerate as far as he can. He crowds their minds with worldly cares and anxieties. He drives the mind as much as he possibly can from the great concern, and so keeps out good thoughts, which otherwise would fill the soul all the day. But when the christian sets about his proper work in good earnest; Satan cannot keep the believing heart from being employed in holy and spiritual concerns. The Christian's heart ascends in spite of the devil's efforts to keep it down.

3. Can Satan *inject evil thoughts* into our hearts? There can be no doubt, but he instils all manner of wicked thoughts into the minds of his own children. He put it in the heart of Judas to betray his Master, and filled the hearts of Ananias and Sapphira, to lie

unto the Holy Ghost. And so he still fills the hearts of wicked men with multitudes of evil thoughts and sinful passions; so that God is not in all their thoughts. He has not the hearts of the righteous at command, like the hearts of the wicked; yet he greatly ensnares them, and draws their minds from God, by a thousand stratagems. He works chiefly on their imaginations, and paints earthly objects in the most alluring form. As he tempted Christ on the mount, with the glory of the world, so by deceiving the fancy, he throws his fiery darts into us. We have now seen, how Satan assaults by himself.

IV.—*Temptations from Satan,* THROUGH MEANS.

When the sinner is awakened to see his danger, and begins to seek salvation, the god of this world employs three very powerful agents, to prevent him from escaping out of his dominion, viz. evil men, an evil world, and sinful flesh.

1. *Evil men.* Carnal and unbelieving men try and strive hard to keep young converts from leaving them, to go after Christ. They try at first to allure them, by enticements, flatteries and promises; they cast before them golden apples, to deceive the senses and gratify the appetite. If all this fails, they threaten them with all sorts of sufferings, with poverty, shame and disgrace, and every thing terrible to nature. In this way, they prevail on some to make shipwreck of their faith, and go back. But they who shall be

saved, go forward in the way everlasting, till they arrive in eternal glory.

2. An *evil world.* The love of the world, and earthly pleasures, fill the heart of man, until grace enters in. And when holy thoughts, and heavenly affections enter into the heart, the indwelling corruptions cry, 'What strangers are these, that disturb our dwelling? We have possessed this heart for many years, and must we now be turned out, to make room for these invaders?" Now, the world strives hard to keep the soul in the service of sin, and promises him riches, honours and pleasures, if he continues but quiet, threatens him with all sorts of sufferings, if he persists in his resolution to run the heavenly race. "Stay," saith the world, "in my service, and I will promote thee unto great honour;" or, "If you depart, I will follow you with all the torments I can heap upon you."

Oh, saith the Christian, if I continue the servant of this world, what will become of my soul in the other world? Now, this evil world marcheth against him, with all his forces, and cries, come afflictions, come shame, and come desertions, and set upon him furiously, and compel him to serve his old master. If he goes in the ways of holiness and righteousness, be you like thorns and briars under his feet, to torment him, and fill his soul with vexations, griefs and fears. Such is the conduct of the world towards young converts.

3. The *sinful flesh.* This is, of all others, the most powerful instrument that the prince of darkness employs, to keep the awakened sinner in his service. Other instruments can only work upon us, but this

works within us, and is always with us; it is ourselves. Flesh, here means, our corrupt nature, which hath defiled both body and soul, being mixed with the whole man, as darkness at the dawn of day is mixed with the light. This corrupt nature is always prone to sin, and ready to entertain all temptations which promise to gratify the lusts of the flesh. This enemy is called, "The old man; the sin which dwelleth in us; the old Adam; the earthly, the carnal, the natural man; it is also called, the law of our members, and the lusts of the flesh, which war against the soul." As Satan is the father, so the flesh is the mother of sin; which, by receiving Satan's temptations into a fruitful womb, conceives and brings forth children in abundance, and nourisheth them.

We may fancy that we hear the flesh, as the main agent of Satan, *addressing* the soul in some such language as this: "What manner of communication is this, which thou hast with Christ mine enemy? Are godly thoughts suitable to dwell with me? Was not I born and brought up with thyself? and wilt thou entertain those that would destroy me? You must know, that carnality and spirituality cannot agree in the same soul. If the spirit live, I die; if the spirit thrive, I perish. And am not I nearer and dearer to thee, than the spirit? Was not I with thee in the womb, and lived with thee ever since? And have not I studied to gratify thee with all carnal pleasures and delights? And wilt thou after all, turn thy back on the old man, thy constant friend? If you offer to fight against him, he will summon legions of lusts to throw out these pious thoughts, disturb his rest and

enjoyment. These then, are the agents which the devil employs in fighting against the soul; evil men, an evil world, and the sinful flesh.

V.—*Christian duties, when Satan* HIMSELF *tempts.*

1. In order to withstand and conquer Satan's assaults, cultivate *pious thoughts*, though they are new things to you; yet nothing more useful to the soul. Holy thoughts are precious things; they are God's messengers; they come from God, and lead to God again. Wherever they are entertained, they bestow exceeding great rewards. Therefore cherish these motions of the Spirit, and know that they come from heaven to benefit thy soul. The very end of pious thoughts, is to wean thy heart from the earth, and fix thy affections on everlasting things; then hold them fast till they accomplish their work.

2. Next, *complain to God* of the enemy's stratagems, to keep pious thoughts out of thy heart. Tell God in prayer, that his enemy and thine, has got possession of thy fancy and affections, and of all the outer rooms that lead to the privy chamber of thy heart; that he hath barred and bolted the doors so fast, that thou canst not open to any pious thoughts. Oh the tyranny of Satan, where he has the dominion!

3. Cry to God also against the treachery and wickedness of thine *own heart*, and complain of its backwardness to entertain any holy thoughts, and say, "If they offer themselves to me, I join Satan to drive them away; and when I try to lift up my soul in

holy meditation, my fancy and imagination soon turn me aside to some vanity." Woe is me, that my nature is thus vile! Come Lord, and open the door of my heart, for holy and pious thoughts. Lord, thou canst dispossess Satan, and fill my heart with thyself, I pray thee to subdue my soul to thyself.

4. Dread all *wicked thoughts*. Doth Satan fill thy heart with proud, unclean, and unbelieving thoughts? Shew thy abhorrence of them, and reprove thy soul for holding any conference with them. Crush them early at their first rising. If you begin to give way to unhallowed thoughts, you may soon be led far from God, and sink deep in guilt and misery: therefore, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation."

VI.—*Duties, when Satan tempts by* OTHERS.

1. Does the enemy tempt you with the *world's* allurements? Remember, that the Lord saith to you, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world; if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." God, and an evil world are at such enmity, that we cannot serve both. "You cannot serve God and mammon." We may here appeal to your consciences, "Know ye not, that the friendship of the world is enmity against God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world, is an enemy of God." If you please the world, you wage war against heaven. "O consider this, ye that forget God!"

Your *baptismal vow* binds you to renounce the

world, with all its pomps and vanities; you have there promised to fight against them, under the banner of Christ, and shall you backslide from your profession, and side with your enemies against your God? If so, "Your latter end will be worse than the beginning."

See how *deceitful and changeable* the world is. All is vanity: all things are on the wing, and passing away. Where you expected your highest enjoyment, you met your bitterest disappointment and sorrow. When Satan paints the world full of glory, many fall down and worship it. But after all, what is the world? It is a reed to lean on, and a shadow to embrace. Ahitophel with his policy,—Haman with his pomp,—Nebuchadnezzar with his pleasures,—and Dives with his riches, all soon found the world giving way under their feet, and the earth opening its mouth to swallow them up. The world first deceived and ensnared them, then forsook them, and at last punished them. What a wicked world, loaded with treacheries! It hates them that love it, deceives them that trust to it, afflicts them that serve it, reproaches them that honour it, and ruins them that follow it. It is reported of a *hermit*, that he saw the whole world filled with nets, and devils standing by, to manage them. Go over the whole world, behold countries, view provinces, look into cities, hearken at doors, see what is done in halls, in palaces, and in private houses. Are not the devil's snares in every corner? Justice is sold, shame is lost, truth is wrested, and right despised. What lying, what slandering, what deceiving is there every where!

The innocent are condemned, the guilty are acquitted, the wicked advanced, the virtuous oppressed. Pride, envy, perjury, and vanity; these are the things that bear rule in every land, town and country.

Ah! poor soul, doth the world *hinder* thee to change thy Master, and condition? Doth it tell thee of riches, honours and pleasures? Say then, with Christ, "What will it profit a man, to gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" Or doth it try to frighten thee with afflictions, persecutions and torments? Say then with the Apostle, "that the afflictions of time are not to be compared with the glory of eternity." Or if all this will not stop the mouth of the world, consider the enmity of the world against Christ, and the vow thou hast made of fighting for Christ against the world. Consider also thine obligation to Christ, and thy danger from the world. Should all this fail to arm thy soul against thy temptations, consider what the world is, how vain, wicked, and delusive, and say to it, 'Away, world!' for the "time is short," and my salvation is in danger.

2. Does the enemy tempt you through the *flesh*? Remember that the Lord commands you to mortify the flesh. He saith to you, "Let not sin reign in your mortal bodies, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof." Again, "Put off the old man which is corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts." Yea, "Mortify your members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affections, evil concupiscence."

The flesh is a *worse enemy* than the devil himself. Never could the devil hurt us, if this inbred enemy

did not betray us into his hands. The sinful flesh is the root, the fountain and the origin of other sins. "When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin." Were there no fire in our wood, the devil's breath could never kindle a flame in our souls, or bodies.

We must *weaken* the flesh, by abating the fuel that feeds its fire. "Make no provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof." We must stop the passages, through which the flesh is nourished. As sin is seated in every part of the soul and body, we must guard every part of both. Keep from the body, drunkenness, covetousness, and gluttony. From the mind, vain thoughts, and pernicious errors. From the memory, the remembrance of sinful pleasures, unless it be to repent of them.

As we must weaken the flesh, so we must also *watch* over it. Though we have obtained the victory in many conflicts, yet it is still plotting against us;—then guard the *senses* in particular, for they are the gates of the soul. "Make a covenant with thine eyes, and turn them away from beholding vanity. Put a knife to thy throat,—if thou be a man given to appetite. Take heed to thy ways, that thou sin not with thy tongue. And let no corrupt communication proceed out of thy mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may benefit the hearers."

The *heart*.—This of all foes is the most subtle and crafty. "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." Then "keep thine heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." Indeed the heart is the chief monarch of this little

world, man, which rules and commands all other parts. It is the main wheel of the machine, which sets all the rest of the wheels going. It is the fountain of all our thoughts, words and actions. As the heart is, so is the whole man. "A good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is evil. For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."

Ah poor soul, doth the *flesh hinder* thee from turning to Christ for salvation? Doth it plead nearness and dearness to thee, and that it has been thy close companion from the womb. Doth it remind thee of the pleasures and delights it hath provided for thee? —Then tell the flesh of the *evils* also which it has produced. Tell it that there were destructive hooks under the baits of pleasures and delights it speaks of. Say, those pleasures met me with drops of honey and departed after giving me cups of gall. The pleasures of the flesh terminate in death and damnation. "If ye live after the flesh ye shall die." Why then should I gratify the flesh to my own ruin? Always keep in mind, God hath ordered thee to mortify the flesh, and that no enemy is so dangerous as that which lives in thine own bosom. You must subdue it, or it will lead thee to the chambers of death. "For, when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death."

In answer to all these things, do you say, I am an *unregenerate sinner*, then where is the use of giving these counsels to a man dead in trespasses and sins?

But are not you a rational creature? Then make proper use of the powers you possess. I appeal to your understanding and conscience:—Doth not the gospel proclaim free and full salvation to every one that will cordially accept of it, and follow Christ? You answer, yes, but my heart is so hard and unbelieving that I cannot do these things? Then fall down before thy God, and cry earnestly unto him, to create in you a new heart, and renew a right spirit within you, and while you are praying, expect an answer of grace; for "he is a God that heareth prayer, and delighteth in mercy." All the inability to turn from sin to Christ, which you plead, is nothing more than your own unwillingness. When you are made willing, your difficulties in becoming a real christian are all removed.

Argue this important business with yourself, as a rational being, and say, "My heart, why dost thou not leave all things to go after Christ in the way of holiness to heaven? Why dost thou not embrace the salvation of God, which is freely offered thee, and turn from sin to God?" Upon enquiring, you will soon find, that nothing stands between your soul and salvation, but your love of sin, aversion to holiness, and unwillingness to be a christian, and a man of God. Now then, does not your reason tell you that you ought to go to God, in prayer, and cry to him for a new heart, that you may be made willing to come into the way of life, and be for ever saved?

CHAPTER III.

FURTHER ASSAULTS OF SATAN.

If the enemy is at first foiled, and the soul resolved to go on, the *Holy Spirit* usually leads him on by these steps. 1. Gives him a sight of sin. 2. A sense of misery. 3. Sorrow for sin. 4. Seeking for comfort. 5. A sight of Christ. 6. Desire after Christ. 7. Relying on Christ. 8. Obedience to Christ.—Satan counteracts him in every step, and strives to keep the soul in his power.—I shall endeavour to describe his modes of assaults, and the soul's duties.

I.—*Of Satan's assaults, upon our* SIGHT OF SIN.

1. No sooner hath the Holy Ghost opened the eyes of the soul to *see its sin*, but Satan comes on with his fiery darts. Sometimes he makes sin *little*, and so prevails on the soul to sin on. Sinners are loth to hear the worst of themselves, and therefore, Satan furnishes them with fig-leaves to cover themselves. He teaches them to say, 'Surely, our sins are not great, we are not so bad as many, and we have some good. If we do sin a little, God is merciful, therefore we have hope.' Thus they stifle the influences of the Spirit of God. The enemy has very great enmity

against the first work of grace on the heart, and takes the greatest pains to blind the eyes of men, and divert their minds from spiritual concerns. It is the policy of Satan to resist strongly, the first work of Christ on the soul. He tries to make sin to appear very little, if any sin at all.

2. Sometimes he makes sin appear very *great*. When he sees the soul dejected on account of offences, then Satan comes in and tells him that they are so great, that they cannot be pardoned. —'Think,' saith he, 'of the evil nature of sin, the number and greatness of those which thou hast committed. Thou hast sinned against light and convictions, against vows and conscience. By so doing thou hast dishonoured God, grieved thy brethren, and brought disgrace on the gospel. How then can you have any hope of forgiveness.' He now turns to be an angel of light, and shews to the soul the evil and danger of sin, and saith, 'Oh, thou wretch!—what hast thou done? What sins are these that cry to heaven for vengeance on thee? What a wretched life thou hast spent on the earth? What grievous and crying sins dost thou stand guilty of?'

II.—*The* DUTIES *that concern us now.*

1. The *nature* of the temptation, points out the duty. When the adversary tries to make you believe, that your sins are *little*, tell him, that no sins are little, because they are against an infinite God. "Against thee, thee only have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight."

All sins, however little they may appear to us, are against the great and holy God. No sin so little but it deserves eternal death. "The wages of sin is death." The *greater* the sin, the greater the punishment, but the least sin deserves eternal punishment. Every sin is a soul-killing poison. We may see this in the sin of Adam. His one sin destroyed a world. All that ever lived, or shall live to the end of the world, are polluted with it. Do we not find that every sin which the soul delights in, sours all the soul and defiles the whole man. It not only corrupts all his actions and dealings in worldly concerns, but pollutes all his spiritual services, and turns his reading and praying into abomination.

The *less* the sin, the greater our folly to commit it. By sinning against heaven, we put on one side of the scale, the glory of God, the blood of Christ, the joys of heaven, the eternal life of an immortal soul, and in the other side of the scale, we put, some momentary pleasure, worldly pelf, fleshly lust, and sensual vanity, and in preferring the latter we discover our extreme folly and depravity. "For what is a man profited if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" What folly do we then discover when we sell our souls for a pin, a point, a trifle, a vanity; for the enjoyment of what we call, a little sin? Speak no more of sin, as little, if we prefer it before the great things of God, and Christ and heaven, and salvation. —What prodigious madness is such conduct!

2. When Satan tells you that your sins are *too great* to be pardoned, tell him, that some of the very greatest sinners have been pardoned and saved. Idolaters,

murderers, and blasphemers, not a few, have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore none should despair of mercy, when they look to Jesus, and rest on the merits of his atoning blood and righteousness.

It is as easy with God to forgive the *greatest sinners*, as the least transgressors. "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." "Let the wicked forsake his sins, and turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and abundantly pardon him." Are thy sins high as heaven, the mercies of God are above the heavens. As God is infinite, so are his pardoning mercies and forgivenesses. Thy greatest sins are but the sins of man, but the mercies of the gospel are the mercies of an infinite being. Then, sinner, you may confidently venture your soul's salvation on the merits of the cross of Christ, and the love of God.

3. The Lord calleth *all sinners*, especially those that are weary of sin: "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Is not this enough to keep thine heart from sinking? Remember Bartimeus, the blind man, sitting by the way side. "Be of good comfort, arise, the Master calleth thee." So he calleth thee. Let this cheer thine heart, arise and come to him, and thou shalt find rest to thy soul. Poor soul, thou complainest that thy sins are great, they may be so, but the mercies of God, and the merits of Christ, are far greater. Jesus saith, Come to me, and I will take thy cares, and thou shalt have my comforts: give me thy sins, and take thou my

righteousness. What would you have more than this, to give you rest?

4. Has the Holy Ghost given you to *see and feel* your sins very great. They are so, yet not greater than God is ready to forgive, when you repent. It is the father of lies that tells you they cannot be pardoned, because they are so great. Were they ten thousand times greater than they are, yet are they as nothing to what the grace of God can pardon, and the blood of Christ wash away. Do not limit the good-will or power of God, when both are infinite. Have no low thoughts of the love of Christ, which passeth understanding. Turn to him, and lay hold on his offered salvation, "and he will abundantly pardon." What can possibly exceed this?

5. But how shall I *know*, whether Satan or the Holy Spirit speaks unto me, for both tell me, that my sins are very great? I answer, if they degrade the goodness, love, and mercy of God, you may know that this is of the evil spirit. On the contrary, when the Holy Spirit speaks, he recommends Christ, and allures sinners to embrace him, and accept of the grace which the gospel brings. Whatever sinks Christ in your esteem, is not of God, but of the enemy. Should any spirit tell your soul that there is mercy with the Lord, but not sufficient to pardon your sins, and save such a sinner as you are, he is a liar; bid him to depart, his speech betrayeth him.

III.—*Assaults under* SENSE OF MISERY.

When the Holy Spirit *convinceth* us of sin, we have a sense of misery. Paul and the jailer trembled. When a man sees imminent danger near him, he naturally trembles. The Spirit keeps the souls he designs for heaven, under a deep sense of sin, that they may dread the ways of sin. And this dread of sin makes the renewed soul cry out, "Oh, wretched man that I am!" Oh, that I had never been born!

Now Satan steps in, and tries first to *divert* the soul from thinking of his danger, and tries to allay his fears with worldly comforts, and false peace. Satan has his comforts to offer; though they are false, momentary, and ruinous. If this way of temptation fails, the enemy changes his mode of attack. He works on our *fears*, and makes them deeper than the Holy Ghost intended. When the flesh is raw, he probes it and irritates it. He now tells the weeping sinner of God's eternal wrath, and of the fire that is never quenched; and thus sinks the soul into deeper dread and fears than God the Spirit intended. He so fills the soul with horror, as to unfit him for all religious duties. When God works fear in the sinner, in order to conversion and salvation, the enemy fills his soul with tormenting fears, with the view of driving him to despair.

2. It is a question, *how* Satan can work this fear on the conscience. It must be in some such way as this —he aggravates the wounds which the Holy Spirit has made, till they become intolerable. He brings

home to the conscience of the trembling sinner, all the threatenings of the word of God against hypocrites, and self-deluded men, and discharges them all with much violence against the poor wounded and doubting soul. His grand stratagem is, to keep the afflicted soul from looking at Christ. He fastens the attention of the convinced sinner so fixedly on his wounds and putrifying sores, that he cannot look on the great Physician, and the all-healing remedy which the gospel brings. Thus does the enemy deal with deeply-wounded souls, keeps them as much in the dark as he can. He darkens their sky with clouds, fogs, mists, and vapours, that they may not see the sun; for he delights to make the children of light to walk in darkness, and to torment those whom he is not suffered to destroy.

3. The grand adversary tries hard to drive those that have a deep sense of sin, into *dark despair* of eternal life. He speaks in some such horrid language as this—'Vile wretch, wouldst thou now turn to God, in hopes of mercy and grace? What hope can'st thou have so late as this? And are not thy sins without number, and of the most heinous nature? And hast thou not continued in thy rebellion a very long time?—how, then canst thou ever be pardoned? Besides, hath not Christ often called on thee to repent and turn, but thou refused. Hath he not graciously offered himself to thee, and thou saidst, "He shall not reign over me." And hast not thou been my servant all thy days till now, and can you after all expect to be numbered with the righteous? Never look for this, the day of salvation is gone by; the acceptable time is past, and never, never can be re-

called. Thou mayest, with Esau, seek with tears thy forfeited inheritance, which never can be recovered. What canst thou now look for, but the anger of the Almighty, tremendous judgments and endless torments, as thy just reward? Do not, then, flatter thyself with vain hope of mercy, but rather expect to be for ever lost.' Thus Satan tries hard to drive convinced sinners into despair, and to lay violent hands on themselves; but the Lord comes to their help in this time of need.

II.—*The Christian's* DUTY *in this case.*

1. Your defence must *meet* the enemy's attack in every point. Would he drive you to despair by persuading you that your *sins are too great* to be pardoned? Retort on him, by saying, that to despair of mercy would be a greater sin than all the rest. Tell him that there is no room for despair, while the door of mercy is open, and salvation offered in the gospel. Other sins are against the law, but this would be against the whole gospel of grace. Other sins are against the justice of God; but this would be against his love, and mercy, and grace. Satan would be glad to drive you to commit such a sin, as would be against all the attributes of God at once. All other sins may be carried away, and buried in oblivion; but despair is a rejection of pardoning mercy Judas sinned more grievously by despairing of mercy, than by betraying his Master; and Cain sinned more by thinking his sins to be more than God could pardon, than by killing his brother. Despair is the sin of hell.

2. Does the enemy try to frighten you with the rigid *justice* of Jehovah? Tell him that justice and mercy have met in the death of Christ, and embraced each other. God can be just, and yet save the sinner. Our God is both righteous and gracious. If the enemy asks, 'Can God save such a transgressor as thou art?' say, 'Yes, and he will betroth me in righteousness, as well as in mercy; for he offers to marry me in Christ, where all his attributes harmonize gloriously.' Let sinners, then, keep an eye on God's justice to keep them from presumption, and on his mercy to save them from despair. Christ hath paid thy whole debt; and when thou comest to live on Christ by faith, divine justice cannot condemn thee. Then plead the merits of the death of Christ, and embrace his offered pardons. Come, then, poor sinner, that borders on despair; see and know that divine justice is thy friend, when thou reliest on Christ, for pardon and peace. Who shall lay any thing to your charge, when you take refuge in the death of Christ. There is now no condemnation, for God hath pardoned you.

3. Doth the enemy frighten you with the *holy law*, because you have so often transgressed it? The law requires of us absolute perfection, and will never justify us without. But we have sinned, and therefore can never be justified by our own merits and obedience: "By the deeds of the law can no man living be justified." Christ hath satisfied and fulfilled the law for man, and wrought out a perfect righteousness for us; and in order to be saved, we must believe in him for righteousness. The way of salvation is to go out of ourselves, and to rely on the active and passive

obedience of the Son of God, who is the Lord our righteousness. Though we can never be justified before God by any obedience that we now can render unto the holy and perfect law of Jehovah; yet the law must ever be our rule of conduct, for we never can be happy in any other way, but by running in the way of his commandments; and we can never glorify God but by doing his will.

4. Does the enemy torment your soul with a *dread of hell?* If he holds you over hell, he cannot send you into hell. When he tells you that you deserve hell, remember that heaven is God's gift. And while heaven is offered to you, tell Satan to his face that you will never be his companion in torments, when Christ is offering you a kingdom. Tell him also, that while you have God for your Saviour, all the devilsin hell cannot send you there, nor keep you out of heaven. In dark times, Satan will try to drive you into despair; but hope thou in God, for thou shalt yet enjoy the light of his countenance. "We are troubled on every side, but not in despair."

5. Doth the enemy tempt you with *self-murder?* Be aware that this is by no means an uncommon temptation from the devil; many of God's people in every age of the world have been harassed and tormented with it. Many that are now in heaven, far out of the reach of temptation, have been exercised with this bitter trial while on the earth. Nay, our Lord and Saviour himself drank of this bitter cup, when Satan would persuade him to cast himself down from the pinnacle of the temple. What wonder, then, if

his servants are made to taste of this bitter cup, as well as their Lord and Master? Nervous people are more harassed than any other with this black temptation of self-murder and blasphemy; but, black as the temptation is, they may smile at it when they take shelter in the clefts, the wounds of Christ.

6. We see the *strongest proofs* of Satan's malice and impudence, when he tempts the Redeemer of the world, and the redeemed, with the most horrid of all sins. For this sin is against law and gospel, against God and man, and against conscience and all happiness. It is of all others the strongest mark of Satan's malice against God and man.

Christian, if Satan should ever *assault thy soul with this trial,* and provoke thee to commit this greatest of all sins, tell him instantly, "Get thee behind me, Satan," go and bear thine own torments, without tempting me to come and share thy misery. When Satan tempts to such a fearful act as self-murder, never parley with these hellish suggestions, for you cannot but know whose voice you now hear. Then say in a moment, Away, Satan. If ever your soul is again assaulted with any black temptations, of a murderous or blasphemous kind, you must know that these come from the prince of darkness, and can come from no other quarter. Then what have you to do with them? Take no more notice of them than of your midnight dreams, and they will soon vanish away. Go on with your own proper work; you see that Satan goes on with his. The less you mind him, the sooner you will get rid of him.

7. We have said enough to shew the *difference*

between the Holy Spirit's and the evil spirit's operations on our minds, though each of them may bring us into bondage. But there is this material difference. Where the Holy Spirit works conviction of sin, he inspires hope in the soul: but the evil spirit excludes all hopes, and drives the soul, if he can, to utter despair of mercy.

At times, the convinced sinner is surrounded with tremendous *darkness*, and filled with horror, and knows not where to go, nor what to do. Do this; go to Jesus, view his cross, and his redeeming love. Lay hold on some of his exceeding great and precious promises, such as these; "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth. Come unto me, all that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. He that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out. By taking this step, hope will soon dawn on thy soul, to remove the darkness, and lead thereon to the light of life, and to the liberty which is in Christ Jesus.

V.—*Satan's assaults when we* SORROW *for sin.*

The next work of the Holy Spirit, is to cause *sorrow* for sin: to take away the stony heart, and to give us an heart of flesh; that is, a soft and tender heart. The Spirit of God works on the affections, and melts them into godly sorrow for sin, which is all one with a heart of flesh.

1. Satan *counteracts* this work of the Spirit, and strives with all his might, to keep the heart in a stub-

born hardened state. He well knows, that if the soul of a poor sinner is bruised and made to feel the burden of sin, that he will not stay long in his dominion. When he sees the tears of penitence and godly sorrow flowing down, he knows that a sinner in such a state, will soon fly into the bosom of Jesus Christ, bleeding upon the cross; and that he will for ever lose his interest in that soul. He therefore labours to keep that man from mourning for sin. Satan is a determined enemy to true sorrow for sin, and does all in his power to keep every sinner from godly sorrow and repentance.

If the heart begins to be wrought upon by the *word*, he raises all possible opposition, to his yielding to the power of the word. And oh the backwardness of sinners to depart from the enemy's kingdom! they long withstand the gospel of God, and the strivings of his Spirit; they can make light of all the means used to deliver them from hell, and conduct them to the land of life, and the glorious liberty of the sons of God. Oh the hardness of men's hearts! What difficulty do ministers find to prick a stony heart to the quick, and make a heart of flint to weep and tremble! Here, God must put forth his strength and influence, or it never will be done.

If the enemy can no longer keep sinners from sorrowing for sin, he will *change* his mode of attack, and try to make them swallow up with over much sorrow, and by that means, disqualify them for true repentance, as in the case of the incestuous Corinthian. This is one of Satan's depths. While the hearts of sinners are quite hard, he tries to persuade

them, that there is no occasion at all for tears of repentance; but when godly sorrow is found in the afflicted soul, Satan tells him, that he can never weep enough to be pardoned. When the flood-gates of the heart are once opened, he wants to drown the soul in sorrow, and despair of God's mercy. Oh the cruel policy and cursed contradiction of our grand adversary! At one time he tells us, that our tears are more in number than our transgressions. At another time, that our sorrow is a mere nothing to our offences: that our sins are numerous, and our tears few—he wars with us with a keen two-edged sword—we need the heavenly armour.

VI.—*The soul's* DUTIES *under this assault.*

1. Does the enemy persuade thee *not to sorrow for sin?* there is cause enough for thine heart to weep, for the heart is the fountain of all filthy thoughts, bad passions, polluting speeches, and rebellious actions. There is therefore every reason why this heart should be the fountain of godly sorrow, of penitential tears, of mourning, lamenting and bewailing over all thy sins.

There is *another cause* for godly sorrow for sin; thy sins have *crucified* the Lord of glory, and made the Saviour bleed to death on the cross of Calvary. Shall the heart of the Son of God bleed to death for thy sins, and shall not thine own heart weep bitterly, mourn and lament over the sins of thine heart and life?

Another reason for a broken heart. If it be not

softened and melted by the *ministry* of the gospel of God, it will, and must hereafter be filled with horror, that would burst a thousand hearts. Christ saith to those who hear the words of eternal life in vain: "Woe be to you who laugh now, for ye shall weep." There is weeping of despair in hell; yes, weeping and gnashing of teeth. You must therefore, either have godly sorrow in time, or have intolerable anguish and weeping through all eternity.

You can weep bitterly for *outward troubles*, for losses, crosses, disappointments, and death of friends. And is not sin far more grievous than any of these? If all outward miseries require one tear, the least sin of the soul may justly challenge a whole torrent. If the death of thy friend, or thy relative deserve one sigh, well may the death of thy soul challenge the last drop of thy heart's blood.

There is the greatest *advantage* in having a broken heart; it has an interest in all the merits of Christ, the promises of life, and the pleasures of heaven. A broken and a contrite heart, shall have God to dwell in it. "Thus saith the high and lofty One, who inhabiteth eternity, whose name is holy, I dwell in the high and holy place; with him also that is of an humble and contrite spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble.

The Lord hath appointed *two* special means for the softening of the heart, viz. the *word of* God, and prayer. The *Law of God* is a hammer to break the heart of stone, by convincing of sin, and proclaiming its terrors against all ungodliness. The *Gospel* of God, is a fire that came down from heaven, to melt

the sinner's heart, by revealing to him the mercy of the Most High. When the heart is truly melted by the fire of divine love, the saved sinner exclaims with admiration, 'Hath the great God of heaven and earth, sent Christ into the world to save sinners?' And hath he passed by all the fallen angels, and millions of fallen men, and come to me, the most unworthy of all! My debt of gratitude is infinite, and shall endure for ever.'

Prayer. This is the other means to break and melt the heart: going to God in prayer; there turn his promises into prayers. The Lord hath said, "I will take away their stony hearts, and I will give them hearts of flesh." Entreat him, for the sake of his Son, to make good this promise to your soul; cry unto him, "Come Lord Jesus, break and melt this heart of mine; whatever I suffer, probe and lance my heart to the quick, rather than suffering my soul to perish."

2. Or, does the enemy try to swallow up thine heart with *overmuch sorrow?* This is more usual with God's people. Many a godly soul hath complained, my sins are enormously great, and yet my sorrow is very slight, and bears no proportion to my offences; and I dare not yet apply the promises of mercy to myself. Nor can I be persuaded that Christ Jesus belongs to me. I must feel deeper grief and sorrow of heart, before I can lay hold on the promises. Oh that any should thus torment their own soul, and expose themselves to Satan's horrible injections and cruel temptations! Away with your objections; venture thy soul on the gracious Saviour.

It is not the greatness, but the *truth* of thy sorrow

for sin, that God requires. Satan tells thee, 'Thy sins are great, and thy sorrow little; there is no proportion between them.' True, nor is it possible, that the sorrow of a finite being, can bear any proportion to the guilt of sinning against an infinite God. And were thy sorrows ever so great, and last for ever, they would not satisfy for one transgression of the holy law. All that a lost sinner has to do, is to look to Jesus, and accept of his offered salvation. When the Jews were pricked in their hearts, Peter would not suffer their wounds long to bleed, but applied the healing balm of the gospel, and saith to them, "Believe on the Lord Jesus." When you weep in secret, under a sense of condemnation, are you sincere? if not, the gospel cannot relieve you. But if your sorrow be sincere and true, Be of good cheer, the Master calleth you.

Remarks.

1. Consider *who it is that calls* you. It is he that came into the world, to bruise the serpent's head. He is Immanuel, God in the flesh; He is the Saviour of the world, one that hath all power in heaven and earth; one almighty to save. This is the person that cries now from the throne of heaven, "Look unto me, and be ye saved;" "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Do you say to him, I am a grievous sinner? He saith to you, that his name is Jesus, who came to save you from your sins; and that he is ready to "save to the uttermost, all that come to God by him." With

what bowels of mercies does the Lord Jesus pity your miserable condition as a ruined sinner! With what affection and earnestness does he call on you to come to him, that you may have life! He begs and prays, yea, beseeches you to come to him for pardon and salvation. Nothing now is wanted but faith to believe what he saith to you; and nothing but unbelief keeps you away. But how can you keep away, when the meek and lowly Jesus intreats and beseeches you, by all the tears he has shed for you in the days of his flesh—by all the bitter agonies of Gethsemane, and the blood he hath shed on Calvary's cross, to come and rest thy weary soul on the bosom of his love.

2. Consider next, *whom he does call.* Is it not those that are weary and heavy laden? Is it not those who mourn and groan under the weight of sin? And do not all the invitations and promises of the Gospel belong to those that mourn in Sion? Mourners in Sion, who are meek and lowly of heart, are the very people with whom the most high God delighteth to dwell. The true mourners shall not always weep, for they who sow in tears, shall reap in joy. Christ will in due time, wipe all tears from their eyes. He saith, "the Spirit of the Lord is upon me, who hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, and sent me to heal the broken hearted." The harvest shall follow the seed time; they who weep now, shall laugh.

Indeed, sorrow for sin, gives no interest in Christ, faith alone unites the soul to him; yet no men will come to the Saviour, till they feel their need of him, and must perish without him. None will ever come

to Christ for salvation, till they feel sin a burden and bondage. Were a man under a heavy load in a dark night, to hear a person passing by, he would earnestly call for help; so the soul under the painful load of sin, will call to Jesus when he passeth by. He runs to the word of God for direction how to act, and where to go. When sinners act so, they shall soon hear the voice of Jesus crying, "Come to me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

3. Consider lastly, for *what end* doth he call you? Is it not to take possession of Christ, and all the privileges of his kingdom? Is it not that we may have fellowship with the Father and with the Son? Is it not that we may have reconciliation with God, and sweet communion with our Lord and Saviour? Were Jesus to say to you, come with me to the garden to endure bitter sorrow and sufferings, would you not go? How much more, when he invites you to come to him to get rid of the burden of sin, that you may find rest to your soul. If suffering with Christ be an honour, how much more, to reign with him? If indeed, you come to Jesus, you shall have your pardon now, and at last, the crown of life, and joy that never ends. Ah, poor soul, why weepest thou? Why not wipe away thy tears, and like Thomas, turn to Jesus and say, "My Lord and my God?"

Do you ask, when shall I *sorrow enough* to receive comfort? when you sorrow in sincerity and truth; when the soul is weary of the fetters of sin, more than of the sufferings for sin. While you cry louder, Oh my grief, than Oh, my guilt, you are not prepared to

receive comfort. If you cry louder for comfort than for grace, your soul is in a bad state. Then say, 'Lord, if my heart is not sufficiently broken, break it still more; if my wounds are not thoroughly searched, lance them still deeper; if there be any wickedness in me, search me, Lord, and try me, till my heart is right with God; if I grow proud, and turn thy grace into lasciviousness, and despise my weaker brethren; then let me fast longer from comfort.' Man must come to this humble frame of mind, before he is fit to enjoy much comfort. While the sinner is self-confident and froward, his will is not yet properly subdued, and he may expect more stripes and deeper sufferings. "Humble yourselves therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time."

VII.—*Assaults when* SEEKING FOR COMFORTS.

The soul sorrowing for sin is commanded to seek for *comfort*. And for that purpose, the Lord saith to his ministers, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people." Satan is aware of this, and in order to prevent it, coins false comforts of his own: he saith, Come soul, I see that nothing but comfort will satisfy thee, here is plenty of comfort ready for thee; thy *old companions* stand at the door, go and join them in their mirth, and drive away thy dumps and melancholy fits. They now cry, 'Come friend, let us enjoy the good things of this world, let us fill ourselves with wine, till our hearts dance for joy. Let none of us go without our full share of all sorts of pleasure;' if the soul objects

to all this, and saith, these pleasures are carnal, but my sorrow is spiritual; then saith Satan, go to the word, and to prayer, and other duties; yes, go to thy religious duties, and *rest in them*, thou needst not go farther. Thus the enemy tempts the soul to drown his sorrow in worldly pleasures; if he fails to gain his point in this way, he tries to persuade the soul to rest in duties and means of grace, and never go to Christ. He cares not where the soul has comfort, if he rests short of Christ, well knowing, that the sinner can neither be safe nor happy, but by resting on Christ the Saviour. When the soul flees to Jesus, he is for ever delivered from the dominion of Satan, and introduced into the land of life, and the paradise of grace. When the soul rejects carnal comforts, and rests in religious duties, saying, 'None but' Christ, give me Christ, or I die;' then is Satan full of rage, and useth all his wit in devising some secret plots, some conceited snares to entangle the sinner, and keep him still in a state of misery, to make him sick of religion.

VIII.—*The soul's wrestling against these assaults.*

1. It is not so much your *loose companions* that are your tempters to evil, as the devil in and by them. When Peter tried to persuade his Master to avoid sufferings, Christ rebuked the evil spirit that spoke in Peter, and said, "Get thee behind me, Satan." Peter was set to work by Satan, therefore Christ calls him by the name of Satan. Those wicked men are instruments in the hand of Satan, who propose carnal comforts as a cure for spiritual wounds.

The wounded soul, who is seeking for comfort, should never go for advice to *unregenerate* men, this is not God's appointed way. Alas! such men will think you mad, for they know not what trouble for sin means. Why then discover thy desease to those who are no physicians? Go to him who healeth all manner of diseases, for so doth God direct you. When Paul was converted by divine grace, he conferred not with flesh and blood, but instantly obeyed God. So do you. Doth God, by his ministry, convince you of the danger of wicked ways, and of your duty to come to him for safety and comfort? Obey instantly, and consult not with flesh and blood.

What your sinful companions offer to you, are not *suitable*, for the healing of your sorrowful, sin-sick soul. What can idle companions do, to quiet your conscience, forgive your sin, support your spirit, or fill you with spiritual joy? Alas! all their joys "are but the crackling of thorns under a pot." Dreams and vanity, form their highest mirth. What agreement is there between carnal mirth and spiritual sorrow? no more than between light and darkness. Away with them all: depart from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all your sins.

Nothing more necessary or advantageous to awakened souls, than to *depart* from evil company. The Apostle saith to such, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation:" he insisted much on this, and earnestly entreated young converts in particular, to separate from injurious company; Paul knew how injurious they were to young converts. When pious

souls seek comfort with the ungodly, they seek for the living among the dead. What living, lasting joys can be found among those that are dead in sin! Oh save thyself from them, in haste!—So much for the temptation to keep bad company.

2. Next, for the temptation to *rest in religious duties*, without going to Christ. We are all *naturally prone to rest on our own works*, for this was in the beginning, the way of life, "Do this and live." Though this door is for ever shut against us all, yet still we try to establish our own righteousness; and after we are convinced, that by the deeds of the law, no man living can be justified; yet our hearts are still cleaving so fast to the law, that nothing short of the all-powerful grace of Christ, can wean us from seeking life by our own merits and duties.

The means of grace *must be used*, and the duties of religion must be performed, by every soul, or the blessings of religion cannot be obtained. The promises are made to those who diligently seek the Lord in the way God hath appointed. You must be found in the king's highway, or you cannot meet with him. Without using the means of grace, we can no more have our souls fed and nourished, than the husbandman can expect reaping without sowing. They who are above using the means of grace, are under the curse.—This then is a fixed rule of heaven, we must be in the constant use of the means of grace and duly attend to our religious duties.

Yet it is highly perilous to *rest in duties*, and go no further: for the duties of religion are only means to an end. Many deluded souls, when they attend on

the means of grace, and go through a round of duties, quiet their conscience, and feel satisfied that the work is now done, and that all is safe. By this they trust to what they themselves have done, instead of going on through divine ordinances to rest on what Christ has done by his obedience unto death. Those who rest in duties instead of resting on Christ, are building on the sand instead of on the rock. Like Lot's wife they go out of Sodom, yet never go in to Zoar, but perish by the way. See the danger of resting on duties.

We must go through duties *to Christ himself*. We must rest no where short of him. "If ye return, return unto the Lord." It is not enough that we go to all the means of grace, but we must go to Christ himself. Use the means of grace for this very end. Search the Scriptures to find Christ,—hear sermons to bring you to Christ. Get your affections warmed in religion, that they may carry your soul with a full tide to your beloved Lord and Saviour. In him alone is life, and there is salvation in no other. My christian brother, if you seek for spiritual comfort, go to the means of grace and the duties of religion, but take heed that you do not rely on them; go on through them and lean your soul on the Saviour, then you are safe and may defy Satan with all his wiles and malice, and find rest to your weary soul.

IX.—*Satan's assaults on our* SIGHT *of Christ.*

The soul now understands that there is no true and lasting comfort to be enjoyed, but in Christ, and begins to seek him in good earnest. Young converts cry

to one another, "Come, let us return unto the Lord, for he hath broken us, and he will bind us up." "Let us follow on to know the Lord, for to know him is life eternal."—'Oh, very well, saith Satan, If nothing else will do for you, but to know Christ, you shall know his whole history, acquaint thyself with all that is said of his person and character, his offices, and plan of salvation. Acquaint thyself with all that is said of him from his birth to his taking the throne above.—Why all this, saith Satan, I am willing you should learn, and gain as much historical and speculative knowledge of Jesus Christ as you can obtain. Then you may sit down quietly, and give yourself no further trouble, for now you can talk fast enough about the Saviour, and what more can be necessary for you.' Oh! the depth of Satan! He wants to put men off with mere head knowledge of Christ and salvation, and to rest there and go no further. The distressed soul longs to have believing views and heart knowledge of the Lord Jesus, and saith, "Oh that I knew where I might find him." Give me to know Christ or I die, and perish everlastingly. Now the enemy changes his mode of assault, and tries by all means to persuade the inquiring soul that no other kind of knowledge of Christ can be obtained in this world, but speculative and historical knowledge. The enemy prevails with too many to believe him. They rest in head knowledge and perish there.

X.—*The soul's* WRESTLING *against this assault.*

1. Labour to see *the glory of Christ.* His glory

is above the heavens, and far above all things that exist. The stars in the heavens are very brilliant luminaries; but as soon as the sun appears, they are all eclipsed. So the magnificence and glory of the whole universe vanish and disappear, when the glory of Christ, the sun of righteousness is revealed.—Take pains to have believing views of the transcendent glory of our great Immanuel, till your heart is filled with admiration, wonder and delight: till your heart cries out with joy, "Oh the height, and depth, and breadth, and length of the glory of God in Jesus Christ! The beauties, and excellencies of the Son of God will afford to all the saints, inconceivable and eternal delights. Let this be your study till your heart is weaned from the earth, and for ever fixed on the glorious Saviour.

2. Labour to have such practical and experimental knowledge of Christ as will deeply *influence* and win your heart. Alas! most men rest in mere notions about Christ. The knowledge they have of him has no power with the soul; it leaves them the same characters without any change of heart or life. Believing views of Jesus, have a powerful influence on the very hearts and souls of men. It quickens the dead, and makes the barren fruitful. When we know Christ and the power of his resurrection, we are transformed into his likeness, and leave all things to follow him. Are you anxious to know, whether your knowledge of the Saviour be a true and saving knowledge or not? You may know in this way. If indeed you have a believing, experimental, heart-acquaintance with the Lord Jesus, it influences, affects, and impresses your

heart and wins your affections. It makes you to admire, love, and delight in Christ, to trust in him alone for all things in salvation. True knowledge of him draws the very heart to him. If you feel this influence you may safely conclude that you have the knowledge of the Saviour. On the contrary, if the knowledge you have of Christ, has no such influence upon you, rest assured, that it is only speculative and historical, and will come to nothing. As the influence of the sun makes the earth to bring forth and bud, so does the influence of grace on the heart make it produce the fruits of the spirit. At one time you hear the gospel preached without any impression; at another time the very same gospel comes with power to the soul. Divine influence makes this mighty difference.

3. Labour to know Christ as the *object of faith*, as well as of the understanding. Many search for Christ as mere students, and not as believers. If you set Christ before you as the object of faith, this will greatly help to draw your faith into action. As the setting of temptation before a man draws forth his corruptions, so the setting forth of the glory of Christ before the believer, hath a mighty power to bring his faith into lively exercise. More, setting Christ before us as the object of faith, is the way to produce faith where it is not. Do you complain that you have no spiritual faculty to behold the glory of Christ, then why not set Christ before you as the object of faith, this would have a quickening power, to work life in the soul, to cause the eye to see him, and the heart to embrace him. Sinner, try to see Christ through faith, and pray God the Spirit to shine into your heart to give

you to see the glory of God in the person of Jesus Christ.

4. Labour to know Jesus Christ as your *justifying righteousness.* The Spirit of God convinceth all the souls that he bringeth to salvation, that they must be saved in the way of righteousness. He gives them to feel that they have no righteousness of their own, because they have broken the holy law of God. Then he shews them, that Christ came under the law for them, obeyed the whole law, and paid the penalty for our transgressions, and so wrought out a perfect righteousness, which he makes over to all that believe in his name. And so he becomes "the Lord our righteousness." How a guilty and condemned sinner is to be justified before God, is a most important point, which you should take all pains to understand clearly. As the sins of the world were laid on Christ, so the righteousness of Christ is unto all, and upon all them that believe in him. "He was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." The active and passive obedience of Christ forms our justifying righteousness. His death reconciles us to God, and his life saves us. "If when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Oh that you would continue to look at the Son of God through faith, till you can joyfully say, "In the Lord have I righteousness and strength."

XI.—*Satan's assaults upon* DESIRES *after Christ.*

1. When the soul is conducted thus far, the Holy Ghost creates in him some *desires and longings* after Christ. And, indeed, how can it be otherwise? He has heard so much about the transactions on Calvary, and of the wonderful mercies of God in Christ, that the soul begins to taste some sweetness in them; and this sweetness kindles some longing desires to enjoy the Saviour; that it often cries, Oh that Christ were mine! Oh that I had an interest in his wondrous cross, and was made a partaker of his resurrection! I thirst, I long, I faint after his salvation. "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O my God." Oh that my poor trembling soul were now received into the blessed arms of the glorious Saviour!

2. Now Satan sees that this soul is *not far* from the kingdom of heaven, he therefore bestirs himself, and practiseth all the policy of hell against him, to cause him to break down somewhere. He now summons his legions to use all subtilty against this soul, who is about shaking off their rule and dominion: 'Come my angels, lull him to sleep; lead him astray; entangle him in some secret snare, so that he cannot escape. Come, we have hopes of succeeding in keeping him: have we not destroyed many that once bid fair for the kingdom of heaven? we may succeed with this man as well. Perhaps, it is only a religious fit, a pang, a flash that may soon die away; if we use all craft in time, we may persuade the man who is now

hot after religion, to be in a little while, as hot after the world in some form or another.' We see, that numbers are all for religion, burning with zeal under a touching sermon; but soon cool, when they go away, and are as far from any desires after Christ, as ever they were before. Sudden desires, seldom ripen into a deliberate choice. Rash and hasty vows, do but rarely settle into a permanent resolution, to renounce sin and self, and to cast the soul wholly on Jesus Christ. Come then, saith the adversary, let us blow on these desires, and blast them in the bud, so that they never bear fruit, nor come to maturity of faith. Thus Satan calls on his legions, and they arm themselves against the soul, now panting and breathing after Jesus Christ.

XII.—*The soul's* WRESTLING *against Satan.*

1. Here attend to *these duties.* Be not satisfied with sudden pangs of affection, but labour to preserve those impressions, which the Spirit has made on your soul. So the Apostle saith, "That we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time, we should let them slip," or, run out as leeking vessels. It may be, that your desires at present are strong, earnest and vehement: that you have extreme thirst, like the parched earth, for refreshing showers, or as the hunted deer for the water brooks. Surely this is well, and far better than cold, lazy, and heartless desires. But take heed, lest this prove as the early dew, which disappears at noon day.

But what should I do, to *preserve* these impressions? If thou hast got this heat at a sermon, or in any public ordinance, go from thence to thy closet, and nourish thy present frame, that thou mayst pour out thy heart more effectually in prayer to God. Oh, beg of God not to leave thee short of saving faith; beg of him to cherish these beginnings, and keep in mind the promise, that he will not quench the smoking flax, nor break the bruised reed.

Or, if thou hast got this heat in *prayer*, or in any private duty, hold on in that duty, and also wait on God in the use of public means. The spouse that sought Christ by night on her bed, would not rest there, but would rise and seek for him in the streets of the city. So should you go from private to public duty, and from public to private duties again. The enquiring soul saith, "Is Christ to be found in the public ordinances? Then to the public assemblies let me go." "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God, O when shall I come and appear before God? O God! thou art my God, early will I seek thee, that I may see thy power and thy glory, as I have seen thee in thy sanctuary."

2. Try your desires by the touch-stone of *God's word*. But how may I be assured, that my desires after Christ are true, and not false? Try them by these marks. Every true desire after Christ and salvation, is joined with a firm resolution to sell all for Christ, to part with all sin, to bid adieu for ever to carnal delights. It is not a hasty wish, like that

of Balaam. Many desire to be happy, but are not willing to be holy. They would gladly be saved, but dislike the way. Now if you truly desire to be a christian, you must live as a christian, and part with sin for Christ. Say now, Christ is a thousand times better to me, than the most pleasurable sins. Oh that I may sin no more!

True desire after Christ and grace will incline your heart to attend on the *means of grace*, where you soon derive some life, strength and vigour. It is not a lazy, but an active desire. It is not like a man that tells you that he is anxious to live, and yet will neither eat nor drink. So here, it is in vain for you to say that you desire Christ and spiritual enjoyment, and yet will not attend on divine ordinances where Christ is to be found, and enjoyed. If you neglect the word and prayer and meditation, it is folly to talk of your desire after him. Mere desires will quickly vanish. Take heed then that you do not make light of the ordinances of God, lest you loose salvation finally.

Again, true desire after Christ and grace, is both *earnest and persevering*. It is not like a meteor that vanisheth away, but abides in the soul. It is a thirst which nothing can quench but drinking of the waters of life. This kind of desire is not produced by a storm of terrors and alarm, which vanisheth away when the storm is over. Many in a fit of terror are willing to do or to suffer any thing, to keep out of hell and go to heaven; but when the fit is over, they will not deny themselves, and take up the cross, to follow Christ. They will not cross their nature, fight against lusts, wrestle against Satan, nor labour after righteous-

ness and holiness. Such vain wishes soon come to nothing. Come, then, and try your desire by this mark. Does your desire take root in true humility, and persevere till you drink of the river of life? Does your soul cry, O give me Christ, or I die. My soul is restless, and will continue restless till I have Christ in my arms of faith. You may safely trust such a desire as this, and rest assured, that Christ will satisfy the desires of those that thus breathe after him.

XIII.—*Satan's assaults upon* RELYING *on Christ.*

The Holy Spirit, who leads on the soul by steps, begins now to work in the soul a *relying on Christ.* And this is that act of faith, to which justification is promised. It is called affiance, dependance, and reliance. Any word that speaks of the humble soul resting upon Christ for pardon of sin, and for everlasting life, means saving faith. And that is what the Spirit now works in the soul that he resolves to save. I would have this to be well understood: for this is the hinge on which the doors of heaven turn. When the soul is enlightened to see the evil of sin, and that Christ alone can deliver from the torments due to sin, he throws himself into the arms of Christ, embraceth him, and hides himself in the clefts of the rock, crying, "O Lord, hold me fast, or I perish for ever." By this act of faith, we are justified through the merits of Christ Jesus.

Now when *Satan* sees this, he knows that the soul

is no longer under his dominion, but is gone over to the kingdom of Christ, therefore the enemy is determined to harass and torment him to the uttermost; and most commonly he takes these methods of troubling and tormenting the young Christian.

1. He first of all attacks his *faith*, in various ways. He strives to keep the hand of faith from laying hold on the promises of God, and saith to the soul, "These promises are indeed very great and precious; but what have you to do with them? They are not made to you, it would therefore be the greatest presumption in you to lay hold on what does not belong to you. You have sinned so and so, therefore the threatenings alone are your portion, and not the promises." The tempter now tries to darken the views of the believer with cloudy vapours and misgivings, so that he cannot see the promises, and thus drives the soul into a state of melancholy, that he may be unfit for the actings of faith. But the grand artifice of Satan is to divert the mind from its great concern, and amuse it with some earthly things, if he fails to keep the soul from believing in Christ.

2. He tries next to destroy the *comforts* of believing. He breeds in the soul a strong suspicion that he does not believe. And here the soul complains in this mournful strain, 'Alas! I cannot think that I really and truly rest on Christ. I seem to cleave more frequently to earthly things, than to the things of the Spirit. I do not wholly and constantly cling to the bleeding wounds of Jesus Christ. I am up and down, instead of resting continually on the freeness of his grace, the strength of his love, the merits

of his cross, and the faithfulness of his promises. I ought to rest steadfastly on these things as on an eternal rock. And can my constant wavering be a true resting on the Saviour?'

Oh the *depth of Satan!* He strives hard to keep the soul from believing; and when he fails in this, he shakes our faith, so that we may have neither peace nor joy in believing. See how he dealt with Simon Peter, and with Job. When he could not destroy their faith, he endeavoured to destroy their comforts. So he deals with believers in general. If he cannot keep them from believing in Christ, he will try with all his might to keep them from all comfortable enjoyment of Christ.

XIV.—*The soul's* WRESTLING *under this assault.*

1. Does your great enemy try to *separate* your soul from the promises? Then take this course to ward off his temptations. First of all, treasure up the promises of God in your mind and memory, that they may be ready at hand on all occasions, especially in dark nights of tribulation and severe conflicts. Such as these: 'Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' Treasure up these, with thousands more of the kind.

Next, take *possession* of the promises, make them your own property and inheritance for ever: "for this is the heritage of the servants of the Lord."

When you read in your Bible, any promise of Christ, or any promise that Christ makes to his believing people, lay hold on it, and claim it as your rightful property, and say, this is part of my heritage, on which I am to live.

If *Satan pleads* that the promises are not made to you, and that you have no right to them; tell him to his face, "that he was a liar from the beginning." Recollect that when you were without God in the world, he told you often enough, that all the promises belonged to you, and none of the threatenings. And now when you are in Christ, he would persuade you that all the threatenings, and none of the promises, belong to you. Let the enemy say what he will, if you depart from all iniquity to serve the living God, every promise in Christ is to you a mine of gold.

Take particular notice, that the Lord Jesus Christ not only invites, but even *commands* you, to believe in him, that you may have your sins forgiven, and your soul saved for ever. How often does he command you to believe in him, and to lay hold on eternal life? Luther, when under sore temptations, which made his heart bleed, and his eyes to flow with tears, said one day, that the Lord's word of *command* to believe, relieved his soul more than all things else. Doth Satan tell you not to believe the promises? but remember that Christ commands you to believe them all and claim them for your inheritance. And whom should you obey, the God of truth and love, or the father of lies, who was a murderer from the beginning?

2. Again: 'Doth the tempter tell you, that your

faith is not constant, and always alike, therefore no true faith.'—This is a fallacy, and not truth. The experience of all saints can tell you, that faith hath its flowings and ebbings. Christians are on the mount of joy, and in the valley of tears by turns. At times they could die for Christ, and at other times, they are afraid to suffer for him. David one day saith, "I am not afraid of ten thousands of the people." Another day he cries to the Lord, "O spare me a little, that I may recover my strength," &c. Faith may be so interrupted, that the pulse of it cannot always beat alike. Yet the pulse of faith never ceases to beat in some degree.

Faith that is not always equally strong in exercise, is always *true in principle*. If it be faith, it truly relies on Jesus Christ. A Christian may at times only see as in a mist, but he never has his eyes put out: Christians under Satan's temptations, are too apt to misjudge their own state, and so injure their happiness. They call their faith presumption, when the ungodly call their presumption, faith. The hypocrite calls dross gold, and the Christian, at times, is ready to call his gold, dross. Christ may be saying in heaven of such an one, Thou art saved, thou art saved, while he might be crying on earth, I am lost, I am lost. The angels in heaven may be rejoicing over him, whom we see here mourning, and will not be comforted. Do you say, that you do not believe and rely on Christ. How then do you so hunger and thirst after Christ, if you do not believe in him? Could there be such a care to please, and fear to offend him, if you did not believe in his name, and

rely on him for eternal life and salvation? Could there be such a willingness in you to part with all things for Christ, if you did not rely on him, as your portion and inheritance? Surely this is impossible. Be content, therefore; if you have no comfort, you have faith, though weak and wavering.

XV.—*Satan's assaults on* OBEDIENCE *to Christ.*

1. The last act of the Spirit as to conversion, is to work in the soul an *obedience* to Christ.—True faith cannot be without works; the soul that truly takes Christ, as a Saviour to deliver him from the misery of sin, is willing also to take him as a Lord and King, to serve, love, honour and obey him. And for this purpose, the Holy Spirit works in the new-born soul a willingness to spend the remainder of his life in endeavouring to subdue sin, and mortify corruptions. He now seeks to be sanctified and purified, and aims faithfully to render new obedience to the Lord Christ, and is now willing to do or to suffer any thing for his sake. Saving faith is an obedient, active faith. That faith which produceth no holiness of heart and life, is a dead faith. "As the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also."

2. Here the evil spirit tries first to persuade the believing soul, that *works* are no way necessary now, when he is saved by grace. He would make him believe, that a naked Christ, and a naked faith is quite enough. The enemy saith to the young convert, 'Hear no sermons, but those that hold forth free love,

free justification, free grace, without any mixture of the works of the law. To what purpose, saith he, is a working faith, and the obedience of faith? He goes on and saith, Christ hath redeemed us, and requires no obedience, but merely to believe and be saved. Why then should you vex and torment your soul, by mortifying the body of sin, and striving to lead a new life?' Such is the enemy's first sermon: the second is like unto it.

When the enemy sees the new born soul *determined* to obey the Lord Christ, and go in the way of holiness to heaven, he comes on and saith to the soul, you take great pains to obey your Lord and Master, but all your obedience proceed from *nature* and not from faith, and therefore is all in vain, you may as well do nothing, 'for you know, that what is not of faith is sin.' And you may know that you have no true faith, and that all you do is from natural or moral principle, and not from saving fath. So speaks the subtle enemy.

XVI.— *The soul's* DEFENCE *under this temptation.*

1. Doth the tempter say that a *naked faith* is enough? This is false, a naked faith is no faith at all. That faith alone is true, which worketh by love. John Huss used to say, 'that where good works appeared not without, faith was not within.'—There is a natural connection between faith and works. Where the one is, the other must be; the faith that embraceth Christ, will obey Christ, and be fruitful in all good works. If it apprehends and lays hold on

Christ, it also purifies and cleanses the heart. Then, let no man separate what God hath joined together. If we are justified by Christ, we are also sanctified by his Spirit. "Whosoever is in Christ is a new creature, and all things are become new."

Good works are *necessary*, for God hath ordered them. "This is the will of God even your sanctification." The law of God still remains as your directory and rule of conduct. And every renewed soul delighteth in the law of God. How very often are we commanded in scripture, to obey the holy law, and practice good works? "Charge them that are rich, that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute," and honour God by their works of faith and labour of love. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

All that rest on Christ for salvation, will and must live in the *obedience* of Christ. "These things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which believed in God, must be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men."—To preach the faith that obeys God, is true preaching. "He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." God hath raised up Jesus, to give repentance unto Israel and forgiveness of sins. The faith that does not obey God, and walk in his ways, is no saving faith. The true believer can have no happiness, but by walking in the way of God's commandments, looking unto Jesus.

2. Are you trembling and fearing that you are nothing but a *hypocrite*, and not a real believer? Then examine whether your good works proceed from nature or from grace. If from nature, you seek your own glory, like the pharisees of old. But if they proceed from faith, you seek to glorify God.—There are many things which nature never can effect, such as these, an unfeigned hatred of sin, and every false way; and doing our duty in pure obedience to the command of God. Nature can never produce this state of mind, then it must be of grace. To live and act for the glory of God, is what an hypocrite can never do. A hypocrite may indeed leave off the practice of some sins; but cannot say with David, "that he hates every false way." A hypocrite may perform all outward duties, but does nothing for the glory of God. Then if you serve God from love to his name, you do what the unbeliever never can do.

But are you *still afraid* that you have no true faith. Then take this course, Go and do thy first work in a solemn manner every day. Pant and breathe and thirst after Christ. Rely, rest and depend on him for life and salvation.—Then go on to your next work of faith. Trust Christ for holiness and righteousness. Go forward, and draw virtue from his death, to mortify the whole body of sin. "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that hence forth we should not serve sin." Draw virtue out of Christ's resurrection, to quicken your soul "from the death of sin unto the life of righteousness" and holiness. As we are buried with Christ, we should rise with Christ, to

newness of life, by faith in his name. Be much in prayer, meditation, reading, and hearing the word. Lay out your gifts, graces, time, strength, and influence, in your master's service. Contrive how you may do most to promote the gospel and benefit the souls of men. "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren," is said to you as well as to Peter. Were you to do all this in sincerity, you might well be satisfied, that your faith is a true faith, of the operation of God. Not a dead faith; but a living, justifying and saving faith.

Despise not the *day of small things*. The breathings of faith proves the life of faith as well as the loud voice of faith, when it saith, "My beloved is mine, and I am his." Does your faith produce such a temper of mind as unites the condition you are now in? Faith has its change of raiments for gracious souls. Sometimes it employs the soul in joy and rejoicing. Sometimes only in cleaving to Christ, trembling. Do you say, that you do not experience in your soul, such a sense of God's love, and joy in God, as the scripture speaks of? It may be so, and that it is a day of darkness with your soul. Then you must try yourself by some other kind of evidences. Is your heart in a fit temper to wait for him who at present hides his face from you? Can you now seek him who seems to have forsaken you: and can you cling to him who is now chastening you? and say with Job, "though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." This is the true trial, and the way to know what your faith is.

Thus much of Satan's assaults in our youth, and at the time of conversion, and of our wrestling with him then.

I do not profess to have mentioned all the devices of Satan, and his different modes of tempting. That is impossible, for his different ways of laying his snares are without number. He knows how and when to tempt every man living with the greatest prospect of success.—Having such a subtle, diligent, and malicious enemy, we have need of the whole armour of God: need to watch and pray, that we may overcome, and arrive safe in glory.

CHAPTER IV.

TEMPTATIONS IN RIPER YEARS.

THE *third period* of Satan's assaults, is from regeneration to the day of death. I shall handle the subject as before, and show first how Satan tempts, and then, how we are to defend ourselves.—He has three ways, in particular of assaulting us, during this last period. i. e.—By persecutions from the world: by temptations from the flesh: and by injections or fiery darts from himself.

I.—*Of Satan's persecutions by the* WORLD.

Christ saith to the Church of Smyrna. "Satan shall cast some into *prison.*" This he did by the aid of his instruments, the world. He rules in the hearts of the wicked, and directs their thoughts, wills and

affections, and so moves them to persecute the children of God, and cast some into prison.

No sooner is a man brought truly *home to Christ*, but he becomes the drunkard's song; music to great men at their feasts: a by-word to the children of fools; and is hated of them all because he follows Christ. Now the seed of the serpent begins to hiss. Satan and his children begin in earnest to load him with false accusations, to blacken his character, and distress his soul. Here the wicked are the devil's millers to grind the grapes. What can be expected from such men but to be squeezed, till the blood gush out. But why should the wicked be so enraged against the godly? Have they done them any wrong? Do they wish them any evil? Nay, they would be glad to do them good, as to their eternal welfare. There can be no doubt of this. But ungodly men are compelled by Satan to act as they do. The old serpent hates God, and the holiness that shines in his saints, with deadly hatred. He knows that he himself is cast out of heaven, and he envies and vexes those that would be entering in. So the wicked that are his instruments have sucked in the old serpent's poison, till they swell with it, and are enraged against the righteous. They say of tigers, that they swell with rage, on the scent of fragrant spices. So the ungodly are in a rage at the blessed savour of true holiness, wherever it appears. A wicked man is odious to the pious, and he that is upright in the way is abomination to the children of Belial.

I know *not any* that fear God, but have in some measure or other felt this assault. Good Mr. Bolton

said, 'If Satan meet with a man, that has, by the grace of God, entered into a state of salvation, he, the great dragon stands in his way, and casts out of his mouth, floods of persecution, vexation and opposition, to overwhelm and crush him, if he can, before he is of any growth and strength in Christ. And to this end, he sets on foot and fire too, many lewd and profane tongues, to scoff, disgrace and discourage him in his narrow, but blessed passage to immortality. But, how do they do it? Why, either by reproaching him, with his former misconduct, or, by charging him with hypocrisy, singularity, and puritanism. They charge him with being a fellow of factious spirit and troublesome conduct. Nor is this on his first entrance into the way of life, but ever after while he keeps the way to heaven. Every faithful christian knows by experience, that so long as he acts in the good cause, and stands up against the evil practices of the place where he lives, that he shall have the spirit of profaneness to fly in his face, with implacable malice and brutish insolence. "All that live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."

II.—*The Christian's* DEFENCE.

If the world persecutes only with the *tongue*, in taunts, jeers and reproaches, practice these rules.—

1. Take heed that you do not *slacken your pace* in religion because of reproaches. What though they cast filth in our way, shall we turn from the heavenly road on that account? What though clouds and darkness cover us for a time, shall we turn our backs

on Christ? No, no; the sun runs its course, though clouds hide it from us for a while. By and by it will break through the clouds and give us light. Say, 'I enlisted under the banner of the cross on these terms, to endure reproaches for his sake, which is the common lot of all the followers of the Lord Jesus. I expect heavier trials than these.

2. Consider how *God and Christ* are reproached daily. See how men trample on the laws and government of God every day. See how the tremendous threatenings of God's word, are scorned by a blind world. This made Bolton to say, 'If any man was to receive the insults which God receives for one hour, he would in the next hour set the world on fire,' and would not suffer his wrath to be pacified, nor the fire to be quenched. Be then ashamed to fret on account of reproaches, or any trivial provocation, when you see what God endures every day. Oh! what is our name to the name of the great and holy God? And what are insults to us, compared with insults to him? Yet behold his long-suffering patience! Learn of him, and follow your Master's example.

3. Consider the great mercy of God in *concealing* the secret sins of our thoughts. Were God to turn our inside outwards, and discover all the filth and baseness within the heart, it would make us afraid of the society of men. While we remember what evils abound in human nature, which we partake of, we may well bear the reproaches of wicked men. And let us never forget the mercy of God in keeping the evils of our vile nature from breaking out in our lives.

Consider what *honour* God hath put upon us, be-

sides the honour of reproach for his sake, Hath not the Lord been pleased to bring us into the honourable state of sons and daughters? Hath he not put his glory upon our souls, and honoured us with the nearest relation to Christ? Hath he not given us place in the hearts of his saints, who are the excellent of the earth, and will have the pre-eminence at the last. Doeg was great in the king's court; but David, whom he reproached, was like an olive-tree in the house of God.

Above all, what are the honours that await us in the *world to come?* There we shall wear the crown of life, in the kingdom of our Father. Were a man going to be crowned, and were reviled in the way by those that knew him not, what would he care for that? He knows, that within a few days, he shall be honoured of those that now revile him. Do we believe that we are going to reign with Christ in glory? then why should we be troubled at what the world say of us here? It will not be long till Christ shall bring forth our righteousness as the light, to the confusion of those that cast out our names as evil.

4. Let us mourn *before God*, and lay our case before him. When Rabshekah reviled God and his people, Hezekiah spread the letter before the Lord, and made his moan there. This was the practice of Job and David. My friends scorn me, saith Job, but mine eyes pour out tears unto God. And David saith, "the mouth of the wicked, and the deceitful are opened against me; they have compassed me about with words of hatred; but I give myself unto prayer." Some call on reviling tongues to help them; but I cry

unto my God, and he shall send from heaven, and save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up.

5. Return *good for evil*, as occasion occurs. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it; being defamed, we entreat. Thus, if we can pray for our reproachers, and desire good for them, and be willing to notice any good in them, and be ready to offer any offices of love, respect and kindness unto them, and so heap coals of fire on their head, this is a great sign of grace, and a proof that we have made a great progress in God's way. It was Christ's own command to his apostles, "Bless them that curse you; pray for them that despitefully use you, that ye may be the children of your father.—Were they not children before? Yes, but now God owns them for his children, and proves *it to* the world. If we act thus, we have the comfort of being reproach as God's people.

III.—*Of Satan's temptations by the* FLESH.

Our temptations come in *various ways*. There are temptations by Satan himself; there are some by ourselves; and there are some jointly by him and us. He can tempt when we do not join with him; and we can tempt ourselves, when he lets us alone. But for the most part, our temptations are mixed; he and we concur, and make one act of tempting—he begins, and we join him; or we begin, and he joins us. When we begin to indulge any bad temper of the mind, we begin, and invite him to join us, which he very readily does. And when he moves our fancies within, or

proposes any object without to tempt us, we soon join with him. These are the ordinary ways of temptations, and it is very rarely we sin without Satan interposing. Were there no corrupt affections in our flesh, the enemy's temptations would have no effect on us; but we have tinder, and he blows the fire. We have temptations from within, and the tempter sharpens those temptations, till all is in a ferment. So we have to wrestle with flesh and blood, and with Satan as well: between both, we have enough to do, and must be warriors all the days of our lives.

Satan *suits his temptations* to our natural tempers and dispositions. He observes to what sin we are most inclined by our natural temper and bodily constitution, and to that he urges us, and so thrusts us, as it were down hill, where we are apt to run headlong of our own accord. If we are ambitious, he paints honours before us; if fond of pleasures, he leads us to scenes of levity and dissipation; if given to covetousness, he spreads his golden net to entangle our feet. We have numberless corruptions, and the tempter has a bait to suit every one of them all.

In this case, it is the christian's best skill, to observe, as soon as he can what are his *natural tempers*, inclinations and dispositions, and to find out what sin he is most prone to; what is his bosom and right hand sin; his beloved pleasure, and his chief delight. Be assured, that this is Satan's strongest hold, and tower of confidence; and this is the door at which he will enter into thy soul. Then watch and pray without ceasing, at this door of the heart.

In some, this sin is worldliness, wantonness, pride,

passion; in others, it may be drunkenness, gluttony, gaming, and many other evil propensities: they are so numerous, that I shall only notice some of the most common, and most injurious of them.

IV.—*Temptations to* WORLDLINESS.

1. The evil spirit sees, that *worldliness* is the right hand, and darling sin of some. Then he pushes them forward in that direction. He paints the world in glowing colours, before their imagination, as he did to Christ on the mountain. He draws many beautiful pictures of it, and exhibits them in his panoramas before the worldling's eyes, and so wins his heart more strongly to the world than ever.

2. He at times, brings the *world itself*, or the things of the world before men's eyes, to allure their senses: thus he set the Babylonish garment before the eye of Achan; and Naboth's vineyard before the eye of Ahab; and Bathsheba, before the eye of David. And then, according to the proverb, "He comes to the sea by the river," and to the heart, by the eye. What poison is there, that he doth not convey by this passage to the soul? Our eyes are his spokesmen to the heart. We first look at the world, and then covet it; and this the Apostle calls, "The lust of the eyes."

3. The enemy, most commonly, comes at the heart, through the *imaginations and affections*, and then gains the will. It is an easy thing for him to win them all, when they are so ready to listen to his suggestions, and willing of themselves to yield to his temptations.

They that will be rich, very easily fall into Satan's snares: "The love of money, is the root of all evil." When Satan sees a man that determines to be rich, he has only to work on this man's will, and he may carry him swiftly by the tide of his affections, to the sea of sin and perdition. As the stone will fall to the earth by its own tendency; so the man whose heart is set on the world, will, of himself, without pulling, fall into temptations and snares.

V.—*The* WAY *to overcome this sin.*

1. Consider, that *worldliness* produces many other sins. What frauds, what deceits, what perjuries, what cruelties, what hatred, what murders, and what villanies, have been practiced, for the nourishing of this lust! Other sins have their bad effects; but this is of all others, the most sordid and base; and in some respects, the most unworthy a man. Why, man hath a soul that should aspire after heaven itself. How he degrades himself then, by being a mere muck-worm, who desires nothing so much, as the things of earth. This is a sore evil that we have seen under the sun!

2. Consider that worldliness is attended with manifold *sorrows*. It abounds with cares, and is full of snares; it is also full of labour. Men toil all day, and cannot rest at night. The fear of losing, pierceth as much, as the pains of getting; there is no end of their travail: it is full of trouble of conscience, and dread of hell. Satan will conceal these pains and griefs, as long as he can, and shew only the gain and

pleasures of the world. Yes, he shews only the pleasures, and conceals the punishment: he shews the gain, and not the pain. But we must try to discover what he conceals; we must look at Jael's nail, as well as her milk; the bee's sting, as well as her honey; the snakes poison, as well as her fine skin. The speech of Abner is true of the world: "Knowest thou not, that it will be bitterness in the latter end?" Oh let this be seriously considered by every soul.

3. Consider, that a man's life depends not on the *abundance he possesseth*. The usefulness, happiness and comforts of his life, proceed not from earthly treasures, but from the God that made them; therefore the meek alone shall inherit the earth, because God is their portion. The wicked may be rich, but he has no true enjoyment, his riches profit not when he is without God in the world. If God in his loving-kindness gives his children riches, he also gives them wisdom and disposition to make a right use of them. God giveth wisdom to a good man, and to the sinner, he giveth travail. To the godly, he giveth wisdom to get riches, and hearts to make a right use of them. But the wicked heapeth up riches to his own sorrow. Godliness is the great gain of man; there alone, true and lasting happiness can be found. The little that a righteous man hath, is better than the abundance of the wicked. It is the meek that inherits the earth, because of his nearness to God. Never tell me of this great man, and that noble man, for they are to be valued by their nearness to God, and not by their earthly distinction.

4. Consider, "That no man that warreth, *entangleth* himself with the affairs of this life." What are we but warriors, against sin, Satan, the world and the flesh. Why then should we entangle ourselves with the affairs of this life. To use the world is lawful and right, but to be entangled with it, is hazardous and pernicious. As the rivers that flow to the sea touch the coasts and shores by which they run, yet they stay not there, but glide on till they are lost in the bosom of the ocean; so must our souls act in travelling to heaven, they must only touch the earth, and stay not there, but pass on, and rest not, till we rest in the bosom of God in eternal glory.—Luther tells us, that when the Pope sent his cardinals to tempt and entangle him, with the promise of great wealth and honour, *turning* himself to God, he speedily said, 'that God should not put him off with these low things.' Oh that all soldiers under the banner of Christ, were of the same mind. Then they might say, "the snare is broken and we are delivered." The silly bird, when he sees his danger, mounts in haste to the skies, and defies the fowler's aim. When you apprehend any danger of being entangled in the snares of the world, lift up your hearts to God in prayer, and mount on the wings of faith and love towards heaven, that you may escape the snares of the world and Satan. Be much in holy meditation on the joys of heaven, so that you may disappoint Satan's hopes, and escape the entanglements of this evil world.

5. Consider the words of the Preacher. "*Vanity of vanities*, all is vanity." Yes, all is vanity. There is nothing under heaven but you may write upon it,

"this is vanity." Dr. Arrowsmith, saith, 'O deluded world.' Write over thy schools, "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom,"—Over all court gates. "Let not the mighty man glory in his might,"—Over thy banks and exchanges. "Let not the rich man glory in his riches."—On thy looking glasses, "Beauty is vain."—Write on thy artillery yard, "That God delighteth not in the strength of an horse."—Write on the doors of thy taverns, "that wine is a mocker, and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise."—Write on thy ward-robes, these, "the moth will corrupt, or the thieves will steal."—Write on thy banqueting-houses, that both gluttons and wine bibbers shall be destroyed together, and shall with Dives, ask in vain, for a drop of water to cool their burning tongues.—Oh! the vanity of this deluded world, and all things in it! Will a man hearken to its deceitful promises, and give his soul to the destroyer, for that which is altogether vanity, emptiness and deceit? God forbid!

6. Consider the *counsel and promise of God himself.* Let your conversation be without covetousness, and be content with such things as you have, for he hath said, "I will never, never, never leave thee nor forsake thee." Surely such an assurance must fix your heart for ever.—Hark again, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I overcame and sit with my Father in his throne." One serious thought of sitting on the throne with Jesus Christ, would, through grace, be enough to wean a soul for ever from worldly-mindedness. But we have more precious promises. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be his God, and he shall

be my son." Let the world be as nothing, and you shall inherit all things. Sit loose to thy relations here, and Christ will be to you better than all relations. "Whoso forsaketh houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or land, for my name's sake, shall receive a hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting life."

7. Act thy faith upon those *promises* in Heb. xiii. 5. Rev. iii. 21. Rev. xxi. 7. Matt. xix. 29. Oh the fulness and freeness of these precious promises. How can you want any thing, when you have a commission from God himself, to draw on the bank of heaven? Let him that is without God in the world, shift for himself and live by his wits. But do thou live by faith on the promises of a faithful God, who will never disappoint you.

8. Commend thyself to God in *prayer*, that he may present thee faultless before the presence of his glory; that he may incline thine heart unto his testimonies, and not to covetousness, that he may prepare thy soul, and speed his work and hasten his coming. "Make haste, my beloved, and be thou like a Roe, or a young hart upon the mountains of spices." He that testifieth these things, saith, "surely I come quickly, Amen, Amen. Even so, come Lord Jesus."

9. *Look up to heaven*, till you grow more and more weary of the world. A man that would always live here, knows nothing of heaven. Christian, you cannot but long for your heavenly home, for in those blessed mansions above, you shall have a pure company, out of the reach of danger and temptations. There is no devil in heaven, they were cast out long

ago, and we are to fill up their vacant places. When the devil rebelled, he was cast into the world of torments and misery. And now he compasseth the earth to and fro, seeking whom he devour. Oh who in this pilgrimage would not often look heaven-wards, and mind his eternal home!

10. Go before-hand into that world to come; *mind thy eternity*, into which thou must enter: the Lord knows, how soon. It is a wonderful thing that men of reason, who are here to-day, and to-morrow in endless joy or misery, should ever forget such an inexpressible concern. Come, shake off thy worldly-mindedness, and dwell intensely on this thought, that within a few days and nights, thy soul will be either in heaven, or in hell: And if in heaven, thou wilt care but little about the world then: and why should thy care be so excessive now? Or if in hell, the world will be gone, but a recollection of thy former anxious care about it will remain to torment thee forever. Oh! feel this now, as if you were entering this hour into the world of spirits. Certainly, thou standest at the door, thou art daily dying, and getting nearer death every breath thou drawest; and there is but a thin veil of flesh between thee and the great eternity. And shall not this wean thee from the world?

11. Think of thy *beginning*, and thy *ending*.—As to thy beginning, thou sprangest from nothing. What, and where wert thou, a few years ago? Where wert thou when thy father was born? Not one now living on the earth, had a being a few years ago. And those that are now alive, after moving for a little while up

and down the earth, will soon disappear and be gone. And thou, who art to-day, full of life and contrivance for earthly things, will in a very short time, lie down in the silent grave. Many things in creation were here, some hundreds of years ago; but where were you, one hundred years past? Not on the earth, not in existence. Think most seriously how lately you came into being.

And what will be your *latter end?* It will be worse than nothing, if you continue a worldling still. Methinks I see thee lying on thy sick or dying bed. Oh, how pale and wan thou art! Thou hadst a fresh and youthful colour the other day. Alas! how much thou art changed from being the gallant man thou wert! How thy strength fails, thy breath labours, thy joints tremble, and thy life is ready to depart! Oh, how little do thy worldly gains and pleasures profit thee now! Such rich purchase, such favour of the great, and such merry meetings, yield no comfort now, nor offer any help in the agonies of death! Thy friends surround thy dying bed, but can do nothing for thee, only looking at thee lying helpless in the jaws of death. And as to thyself, thou canst only look at death aiming a blow at thine heart. Now the blow is given, the soul is fled to the world of spirits, never to return! Keeping this in constant view, would give a death blow to worldly-mindedness.

VI.—*Temptations to* FLESHLY LUSTS.

The sin of *incontinency*, is called by the Apostle, "Turning aside after Satan." The devil and this sin act together on man, and it is properly called uncleanness. (See Rom. i. 24. Eph. iv. 10.) Some call these lusts, the devil's captains, that smite at the soul especially. "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul." But how does Satan stir up these lusts in men?

1. He observes the *temperature* and complexion of such a man. If he be sanguine, he takes advantage of it, and tempts him to incontinency, and all pleasures of the flesh. All ought, but few can say with Paul, "I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection." Our outward enemies, though great tempters, could not materially hurt us, were it not for our inbred adversaries, that betray us into their hands. Sinful lusts are in the body like fire, which any temptation can kindle into a flame. When Satan knows man's temperature, he knows how to suit his temptation.

2. Satan frequently sets before a lascivious man some *tempting object;* as he tempted David with the beauty of Bathsheba in the garden. Satan need do no more with a wanton man, than to say, 'See! yonder is a naked breast, a naked neck, and naked arm.' When you see such signs hang at the doors you may guess what immodesty is within. Satan destroys his tens of

thousands, by conveying his temptations through the eye to the heart.

3. The enemy goes farther than presenting the object; he works on the *imagination*, (which is Satan's chief seat in the soul;) there he works in the children of disobedience, and by their imagination, moves to many base lusts. In this respect, who has not reason to cry out, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" A man whose life is clean, may yet have his imagination like a cage of unclean birds. Peter speaks of some, "who had eyes full of adultery, and who could not cease from sin." Their imagination set their eyes continually on the adulteress, though out of sight. The prophet saith of those who live in uncleanness: "They have made their heart like an oven," ready to bake any thing that is to put into it. So these sinners' hearts are always prepared for every temptation. Oh the power of Satan on the imagination!—there he works perpetually on the slaves of sin, even during their midnight dreams, as well as when awake.

4. Satan can do somewhat *more than inject* and suggest evil thoughts, for he can mightily irritate and provoke; he can stir up the heart to be willing to entertain such a passion, as he provoked David to number the people, and to commit adultery with Bathsheba. When he began with David, he never let him alone, but followed him, and stirred him up to act wickedly. It is true, he could not force David to sin; the will cannot be forced; yet Satan can strongly work on the imagination, and that exceedingly influences the will to consent. And indeed, if the soul

be destitute of grace, it cannot overcome the suggestions and provocations of the tempter, but soon will yield. And this is the way in which the enemy stirs up the sinful passions of the children of men.

VII.—DIRECTIONS *how to overcome this sin.*

1. Avoid all *occasions* of lusts. The Jewish doctors advised their young men never to feed their eyes by staring on tempting objects. It will be our wisdom to check the beginning of temptations; to cast away the first thoughts of any vile sin with indignation. Surely, if we begin to parley with sinful thoughts, they will soon gain strength and power against us; then our difficulty to resist will increase. He walketh more safely who flees from temptations, and keeps at a distance from that which would ensnare him, than he who plays with the bait, or walks among snares. David would have escaped as well as Joseph, had he been as much on his guard. None wrestle so successfully with sin and Satan, as those who turn their backs on temptation the moment it appears. "Flee youthful lusts," is Paul's advice to Timothy. He calls on him, not only to run away, but to fly, or make all possible haste out of the way of temptation. "Come not near the door of her house," is the language of one who well knew the danger. Another said, "Take away the fire, for I have chaff within me."

2. Set a guard on the *outward senses.* "He that looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed

adultery with her already in his heart," are the words of Christ." Looking at alluring beauties is the way to be ensnared. " I have made a covenant with my eyes," saith Job, " why then should I look upon a maid ? " The eyes must be guarded; nor is that all; take heed also of lending thy ears to filthy talking, corrupt speeches, wanton discourses, and profane songs. It was the Apostle's charge. " But fornication and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not once be named amongst you, as becometh saints. Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient. And let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may administer grace to the hearers." Oh that any should delight to speak or hear filthy conversation. Some will ask, may we not jest and be merry, without all this ado ? But have you no other mirth, than these polluting speeches ? Will you feed on what poisons the soul ? Will you make merry with what God condemneth, and for which he threateneth to shut you out of his kingdom ? Have you nothing but filthiness, the service of Satan, and the wrath of God, to play with and excite your mirth ? Polluting speeches and wanton songs are the Devil's music, to prepare sinners for all uncleanness. Thoughts and words prepare for deeds. The same may be said of all lascivious behaviour. All such things must be avoided, for a small spark may kindle a great fire, and a little leaven may soon leaven the whole lump.

3. Exercise all thy affections, of desire, of love, and joy, on *Jesus Christ*. Is he not thy bridegroom ?

Hath not he betrothed thee to himself in holiness? And wilt thou serve his enemy, by indulging base affections? Oh! what indignity is this to thy Saviour? If there be any thing of Christ in thee, turn the stream of thy affections towards him, whose comeliness should always delight thy heart, and whose beauty should for ever inflame thy soul; whose love should draw all thine affections towards himself, and whose conduct should win thee altogether to go after him. Here is one that should lead thee captive both body and soul. Shouldst thou give thy love to an harlot in preference to thy Lord and Saviour, in what light wilt thou appear to God, and his Christ! What! know ye not, that your bodies are the members of Christ, and will you make them members of an harlot? God forbid.

4. Avoid *idleness;* for that is the proper soil for these filthy weeds to grow in. Vile thoughts seldom occur when the soul is usefully employed. A man that is diligent in his calling, hath employment for his thoughts; but if a man be idle, the devil soon employs him. As a standing pool grows filthy of itself, and full of toads and vermin; so the heart that is not engaged in something good and useful, is a fit place for the devil to breed evil thoughts, and filthy passions in. The inhabitants of Sodom were not worse by nature, than other men; but they grew rich in a fertile land, lived at ease in luxury; and then gave themselves up to all abominations.

5. Keep under *thy body*, and bring it into subjection; subdue thy flesh to the obedience and discipline of the Spirit of God. Mortify thy members in the

exercise of piety, and be temperate in all things. The body must be so dieted, that it may be always ready for the holy war. Paul said, "I keep under my body;" and so must we, or be unfit soldiers of Christ.

6. Be regular and sincere in studying the *scriptures*. Read, hear, and meditate, on the word of God, which Paul calls, "The sword of the Spirit." When Christ had his combat with Satan, he did not use his authority, and command him away, but referred to the scriptures. Mere reasoning will never drive away Satan, but the sword of the Spirit will make him fly, when duly wielded. 'I have suffered many great passions,' saith Luther, 'but so soon as I laid hold on any piece of scripture, and stayed myself upon it, as upon my chief anchor-hold, straightway my temptations vanished.' Search the scripture, which is a mine of pure gold, and treasure it up in your mind, memory and heart.

Treasure up the *precepts* that forbid the sins you are most addicted to. If it be uncleanness, urge these texts: Away Satan, for it is written, "Thou shalt not commit adultery; but mortify your members which are upon the earth, fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affections, evil concupiscence. This is the will of God, even your sanctification: for God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness."

You must have ready the *threatenings*. If then you sin, you endanger all. Eve recollected what God had forbidden, but forgot the threatening, "Ye shall surely die," if ye eat of the tree. Take heed, then, that you keep in mind, not only that adultery is

forbidden, but that "Whoremongers and adulterers, God will judge." "The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness; they that do such things, shall not inherit the kingdom of God." As lust is kindled in hell, so there it shall be perpetually punished. The holy angels will, in the last day, bind such transgressors in bundles, and cast them into eternal torments. See 2 Peter ii. 10.

7. Keep in view the *promises* to warriors: "Whoso pleaseth God, shall escape temptation. The God of peace sanctify you wholly: and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body, may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." Keep also in view the *reward* of conquerors: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an 144,000, having his Father's name written in their foreheads: these are they which were not defiled with women, but follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." O live by faith, and feed on these promises.

8. Live in *Prayer*. A man is never overcome by temptation, while he continues praying. If you persevere in prayer, Satan can never prevail against you. But what should I pray for? Pray that God may purify your heart, and sanctify it by his Holy Spirit. Pray that God may strengthen you to overcome the Tempter: tell him that your corruptions are too strong for you to subdue, and pray for strength from God. Pray that he may give you grace to persevere in

prayer, and for patience to wait, till the Lord comes to deliver you.

9. Be much in *meditation* on God's presence, who sees in darkness as in the day. You would be ashamed to be seen of men, and is not God of purer eyes? Think, that sinful pleasures are but for a moment, but the gnawing of thy guilty conscience will abide for ever. Let the thoughts of thy death, be the death of thy lusts. "Dearly beloved, I beseech you, as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul." Meditate on hell. Fiery sins will beget fiery torments. A young man tempted a virgin to an act of uncleanness: she said, Grant me one favour, I will consent. He promised, and asked what it was: "That you burn your finger for one hour in the flame of that candle." Oh! said he, that is unreasonable. She replied, "That it was far more unreasonable to ask her to burn for ever in the flames of hell." A young man, when he felt his temptations strong, should put his finger in the fire, and exclaim, 'If my flesh cannot endure this fire for a moment, how can my soul and body endure the fire of hell through all eternity!'

10. *Look to Jesus* in his death and sufferings; did he endure such intolerable agonies, torture, and torments for thy sins? And canst those still practise those sins with delight? Rather cry aloud, that virtue may flow from his wounds to mortify thy lusts, and to purify thy heart. Looking long and seriously on a crucified Redeemer, will bring strength and blessing from God into thy soul, and make effectual impression on thy heart. Though sin lives in you,

yet by the grace of Christ, it shall not reign, and have the dominion over you. The death of Christ will by degrees be the death of sin in all believers.

11. The last thing that I shall mention is *Marriage*. The principal end of marriage, is to keep a man chaste; and all that have not the gift of continency should marry: "To avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife." Yet, marriage without repentance of former sins, will not abate sinful propensities. O Christian, act as a man of God; avoid studiously all occasions to sin; set a strict guard on thy senses; watch thine eye, thine ear, and thy tongue continually; set all thy desires, and the affections of thy heart, on Jesus the Saviour of thy soul. Nothing will purify the heart, and mortify sin, like looking unto Jesus, in his love, agonies and death. If God mercifully delivers you from the power of your inbred corruptions, and the snares of the devil, and blesses you with a pure heart, and a quiet mind, spend the remainder of your days on earth in gratitude to God for such peculiar favours.

VIII.—*Temptations* TO PRIDE.

This sin is naturally *stronger* in some than others, though none are free from this "pride of life." It is often difficult to ascertain which is the master sin in most men. Yet some particular sin takes the lead in every man. And this proceeds from constitution, education, condition, and other causes, which often changes with our circumstances and situations. Now it is this sin, and in a few years, it is another sin.

But pride is the sin of all, and the sin of ages. This is the most prevalent of all others. It is "the pride of life." It is the sin of the whole world. Unbelief may be considered the greatest bar to justification, yet pride is the greatest hindrance to sanctification. All sins do homage to pride, as their captain and their king. The Lord frequently makes use of other sins to humble the sin of pride in his saints; but pride is not employed to weaken any other sin. Pride was the root of original sin in our first parents, and is of all others the most offensive to the great Jehovah. "God resisteth the proud, and God will know him afar off." He cannot abide the sight of it.

Now Satan *knows all this* full well, and labours with might and main to nourish pride in all the children of men. It was his own first sin, and that which turned him from an holy angel into a cursed devil. And he prevailed in ruining the whole race of man, by persuading our first parents, that they should be as gods. Gen. iii. 5. Ever since the fall, pride claims the first place in the heart of every man. As we are all sinful, we are all proud. All love flattery. "Ye shall be as gods," is a temptation to all sorts of men. Pride is a weed that grows in every soil, and will feed on every vice, till "men glory in their shame." Men can be proud of their humility, and will pretend to be very humble, that they may be admired, and rise high in the estimation of others. What self-denial and hardship will men and women endure, in order to gratify this fashionable sin? When the fashion is to go more than half-naked, how few have the sense or courage to resist such indecen-

cies? Pride must be fed, if they starve themselves. This was the leading sin in Adam, and is the most prevailing sin in all his posterity. We have this lust of pride from Adam, and he has it from Satan. Oh, the pride of devils! it sunk them into hell! Oh, the pride of Adam, it destroyed a world! Oh, the pride of our own hearts!—except we repent, we shall perish for ever.

IX.—*The soul's wrestling with this sin.*

1. I shall speak first of men's pride in *natural things* and outward objects, such as beauty, strength, riches, apparel.

1. BEAUTY.—This is but a skin deep. None so beautiful but are excelled by some flowers of the field, such as the rose and the lily. "Beauty is vanity; but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised." That is the best beauty which a picture cannot express. Boast not of thy comeliness, thou art not so fair as the swan or the peacock; and even harlots may excel thee in fairness. Besides, what loathsome matter lieth hid under this fair skin? What filthy excrements issue out of the nostrils, the mouth, the eye, the ear, to go no farther. A view of all within might humble thee. Beauty is the devil's chief bait to set men's passions on fire; why then so proud of it? Alas! nothing more mutable than beauty. The scratch of a pin may lessen it: a wound or a disease may ruin it. Even old age plows deep furrows in the finest face, and death turns it into deformity. Oh then turn thy affection from such fading

vanity, to spiritual and heavenly beauty, which God admires. What beauty so great as the image of Christ on the soul of man, holiness of heart and life. This is truly excellent, and will endure for ever. Grief and sorrow cannot injure this comeliness. Affliction, old age, and death, cannot impair it, but will turn it at last into glory, which can never fade.

STRENGTH.—This is common to man and beast. The lion and the tiger far excel man. The vilest of men may excel the best in strength of body. And can you be proud of that in which you are outdone by thieves and ruffians, lions and bears? If you are ever so strong, can this deliver you from pain, sickness and death? It can neither defend you from the wrath of God, nor the wiles of the devil. Oh, that you were "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." "Oh, that you would put on the whole armour of God, that you might stand against the wiles of the devil!" This is true strength, in which you may glory; and going in this strength you can do all things, subdue your enemies, and win the crown of life. When strong in the Lord, you shall stand manfully in the day of battle, and come off victorious. Bodily strength, without the strength of grace, is of little value.

RICHES.—Consider that thy riches will not avail in the day of the Lord's fierce wrath. What is a fat portion to a lean soul? Outward things never mend us, but often make us worse. For a man to be proud of his riches, is as if a horse was proud of his trappings.

Thy riches are but thorns, which, without great care, will penetrate thy hands. Many names are given

in scripture to riches, to wean us from them, such as mammon of unrighteousness, riches that fly away, deceitful riches. St. Augustine says, that they are an evil master, a treacherous servant, fathers of flattery, sons of grief, a cause of fear to those that have them, and cause of sorrow to those that want them. Christian professors should never be choked with these thorns, nor entangled with these snares. O christian, never be proud of things that are so transient, and injurious, and uncertain as the riches of this evil world. But set thine heart on the true and durable riches of grace in Christ Jesus.

APPAREL.—Consider that had Adam and his posterity continued without sin, they would have been glorious, and had no need of garments. But sin brought shame, and made garments necessary. Our apparel is our daily monitor, to call our sin and shame to remembrance. Can we then be proud of what is a badge of our shame! It would be as reasonable for a thief to be proud of the halter that he has about his neck, to hang him for his crimes. Why, our apparel is the very sign of our sin. And shall we convert this into sin itself? Had we been without sin, garments would have been to us like clouds to the sun. God clothed Adam, not with silks or velvets, curiously wrought with embroidered gold, but with the skins of beasts, to humble him, and not to puff him up with pride; yea, to remind him of his brutish condition and mortality. O that thou wouldst consider these words, "Array thyself with shame-facedness and modesty, not with embroidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly apparel; but with humility." A nobleman

would be ashamed to borrow clothes of a beggar; and wilt thou glory in the ornaments which thou borrowest of birds and beasts? Thou wearest nothing but what beasts, birds, and silk-worms, wore before thee. They were their natural property, but became thine by force of arms, and violence. Sinner, remember, that thy gay clothing doth not make thee more humble or acceptable with God. It doth not abate thy pride, but increases it. It doth not warm thy heart with charity, nor ward off the darts of Satan, but rather expose thee to his blows. A vile man adorned with gay clothing, is like a dead corpse stuck with flowers; or like the ornamental temples of Egypt, full of reptiles within. If many were stripped of their gay clothing and outward fineries, we should find within, instead of God's image, nothing but pride, wantonness, and enmity. Shame to christians that are slaves to vanity!

2. SPIRITUAL gifts.—As the natural man is tempted with natural things, such as beauty, strength, riches and apparel; so the christian is tempted with spiritual things, such as, gifts, graces, and privileges.

GIFTS:—Hast thou gifts, know that they are not thine own, but God's gifts. "What hast thou, that thou hast not received?" And wilt thou be proud of another's free bounty? Thou knowest not how soon God may take all thy talents from thee. Matthew Paris says, that a Preacher grew proud of a sermon which he delivered, and said that Christ was his debtor for that sermon. He was instantly struck with ignorance for his blasphemy, and obliged to learn the Lord's prayer of a little child. Your gifts were be-

stowed on you for the benefit of others; for the edification of the church of God. And will you be proud of your master's money? Suppose he gave you a great sum, to distribute among the poor, what folly would it be, to call that money your own property? Bernard grew proud of his gifts in the middle of his sermon, and turned suddenly to Satan, and said, "This sermon was not begun for thee, nor shall it end in thee." Never forget that thou must soon go and give an account of all thy gifts to God, who lent them thee, for his own service, and said, "Occupy till I come." Should you pride yourself on your gifts, instead of laying them out for the glory of your Lord and master, and the benefit of his church and people; what woeful account will you have to give to Christ at his coming? Keep in constant mind, that pride of gifts, is like a worm bred in a rose, and is the sin of Satan. Avoid it.

GRACES. The very nature and design of every grace is to humble the heart of man. Yet some grow proud of their graces, which plainly proves that they are very low in grace, if they have any. Pride of heart is the destruction of grace. It would be as reasonable for a man to think highly of himself, because the sun shines upon him, and the air breathes on him, as for a sinner to be proud of his grace. Yet not a few trust to their own righteousness for salvation. How little do such men resemble St. Paul. Though he excelled all men in gifts and grace, yet he rests on Christ alone for salvation, and saith, "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the

loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God through faith." We learn here, that the most eminent in grace trust to Christ alone for the whole of their salvation. Indeed we can never be saved without the grace of God in our hearts, yet the very end of this grace is to empty us of self; and to bring us to live by faith on Christ Jesus.

PRIVILEGES. It pleaseth God at times to give to his people, high enjoyment of spiritual things, such as clear views of Christ, manifestations of his love, a sense of pardon, and assurance of hope, with peace and joy. The Devil often makes these privileges occasions of pride; and this pride soon drives God away; "for he will know the proud afar off." High enjoyment seldom lasts long. This is well for us; for had we always a heavenly feast our corrupt hearts would be puffed up with pride. Even Paul, after the heavenly vision, must have a thorn in the flesh to keep his heart from swelling. If ever God dandles thee on the knees of his love, till joy and comforts abound, take heed then of this sin of pride. Our fine frames and high enjoyments are generally given us before some bitter trials. The three disciples no sooner beheld the glory of Christ on the mount, than they entered trembling into a dark cloud. The Lord gave Israel the manna, first to feed them, then to humble them in the wilderness. So in all our comforts, God means first to humble us, that he may exalt us in the end. The way to heaven is along the dark valley of

humiliation. And they that humble themselves, God will exalt. Take heed then of pride, lest Satan is sent to buffet thee.

3. I shall here propose some GENERAL RULES for us to observe at all times, and on all occasions to resist and mortify the sin of pride.

Press into *God's presence*. Consider the purity, majesty and glory of God. One view of his glorious majesty, would overwhelm thy soul with fear. When Job had a glimmering view of the great God, he cried, "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." This made Elisha to wrap his face in a mantle. This made the angels to cover their faces with their wings; and the four and twenty elders to cast their crowns before the throne of the Lamb. When we behold through faith the glory of the great God, all other glories vanish as the stars before the sun. Come then and look at God and be humbled, and ashamed that a creature so vile as thou art, should ever be proud. When once you see the King, the Lord of Hosts, you will cry, "woe is me, I am undone," because I am all uncleanness.

Note *that sin especially*, which has prevailed most with you, for any length of time, and dwell on it. David said, "My sin is ever before me." Lord, my heart is not haughty, but I am even as a weaned child. Paul, in looking at his past transgressions, cried, "I am the least of all saints, and the greatest of sinners." Men are proud, because they know not themselves. When Agar had studied himself, he exclaimed, "Surely I am more brutish than any man, I have not the understanding of a man." Were

we to examine ourselves, and call to mind our foulest sins, and worst practices, we should see sufficient cause for deep humiliation and weeping.

Observe God's *judgments* on pride.—Nebuchadnezzar was lifted up in pride, and God sent him to dwell with the beasts of the field. And his son Belshazzar took no warning, but followed his father's example. And God caused the hand-writing on the wall to terrify him. The Lord dealt in a similar manner with Pharaoh, Antiochus, and Herod, and other proud tyrants. Attila proudly boasted that the earth trembled, and the stars fell before him; he was choked with blood on his wedding-day. See by this, what God thinks of pride.

Look unto Jesus, till you are made like him. He now calls to you and saith, "Come and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." This is one great end of my coming into the world, to be a a pattern of humility, Therefore, sinners, come, and learn of him to be humble, for God dwelleth with the humble, and "resisteth the proud, and will know him afar off." A humble Saviour and a proud sinner cannot walk together. Christ will never come up to you in pride, therefore you must come down to him in humility, before you can ever enjoy communion with him. Oh, then, "let the same mind be in you as was in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." So he humbled himself for man, and left us an example that

we should follow his steps. As pride is the resemblance of the Devil and what brought him to ruin, so humility is the resemblance of Christ, which exalted him to honours. Oh then, "let the same mind be in you as was in Christ Jesus." Look at him in all the actions of his life, drink of his spirit and tread in his steps, and then go to dwell with him for ever.

Be *humbled* for every act of pride. Check your pride at its first appearing; so did Hezekiah, on his recovery, and the wrath of the Lord was turned away. It is high time to be humbled, when you provoke God to anger. If ye be not humbled, judgment must come down. If your hearts be lifted up in pride, be afflicted, and mourn and weep, lest your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy to heaviness. But if ye humble yourselves, God will exalt you.

Cultivate *holy principles*, to keep down "the pride of life." Fill the bushel with wheat, that there may be no room for the tares and the chaff. Keep in constant mind, "That pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." Humility is the way to glory. "He that humbleth himself, shall be exalted." How is it that we so often forget this, that the way to glory, is to go down in humility? What an admirable pattern of this have we in Christ, who first emptied and humbled himself to the death of the cross; "wherefore, God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name." I know not any good, but humility is a means to obtain it; though places of advancement be slippery, yet the humble shall be upheld there: "And whosoever shall humble himself as a little child, the same

shall be greatest in the kingdom of heaven." O think much of these principles, and constantly remember, that pride leads to hell, but humility to heaven. God ever beats down the proud, and lifteth up the humble.

IX.—*Temptations to* ANGRY PASSIONS.

Some are *constitutionally* choleric, and prone to anger; and some grow into that temper of mind, by indulging their bad passions. When Satan finds one in a bad passion, he urges him on till he is furious: he takes great advantage of the ill-humours of the bodies, to drive us into anger and other sins as well. "Angry and violent passions give place to the devil." Eph. iv. There is a *just* and lawful anger, for it is said, "Be ye angry, and sin not." We may be angry, where God is angry, as Jacob, Moses, Nehemiah and Jeremiah were. But their anger was holy, temperate and short. Jonah said, "that he did well to be angry," when nobody thought so but himself, and when none but God would have put up with his pets and passions: his anger "gave place to the devil." Some are so foolish and wicked, as to indulge their evil tempers, till they fly into evil passions on the most trifling occasion, and often grow angry, without any cause at all. Such persons are an easy prey to Satan; their spirits are like gunpowder, and one spark of the enemy's fire, causes an explosion: "He that is soon angry, dealeth foolishly."

We say of some, that they are very *hasty*; but recollect, "That he who is of a hasty spirit, exalteth folly; and he that is slow to wrath, is of great un-

derstanding." Some are in angry moods, even when they enter on religious duties; but these can no more ascend to heaven in their spirits, than birds without wings can mount to the skies.

You should never *retain* anger: "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath, neither give place to the devil." Some will say, Shall I yield, and give place to one that has done me such injury? Why, you better yield to your brother, than to give place to the devil. If you love peace, drink as little as possible 'of the waters of strife,' and "let not the sun go down upon your wrath, for anger resteth in the bosom of fools only;" "God retaineth not his anger for ever," how much less should we do so? The passion of anger, is a fire that will always burn so long as you supply it with fuel.

What are the *ends* which a passionate man aims at? The gratification of his evil tempers; or he aims at superiority, or he seeks revenge. These are some of the ends which angry passions are aiming at. Selfishness is at the root of this sin, as well as all other sins. The passionate man gets angry now, that he may have his will at another time; but the aim and end of a real Christian when he is angry, is, that God's will may be done on earth, as it is in heaven: it is not that he may avenge himself, but that he may do good to others by opposing sin. This holy anger differs as widely from sinful anger, as a healing balm differs from poison, or love from hatred. You now see, what sort of anger gives place to the devil.

X.—*The way to* CONQUER *angry passions.*

1. Be *humbled* for past transgressions, especially for the sins that you have been most prone unto. Oh, the good you would get by this humiliation! Is not this the way to mortify sin at the heart-root? Weeds are easier got up when the root is moistened, than when the root is dry. Anger and passions are easier subdued when the soul is humbled, than when it is hardened and lifted up in pride. Without this humiliation, you can never mortify your sins of anger and passion; many try, but they all fail, till the heart is softened with godly sorrow. Then begin here, weep for your past evil tempers of anger, pettishness and passions; then you may hope to overcome and subdue them in time.

2. Renew your *covenant* with God, day by day. It may be, that you naturally are overcome with passions; then say each morning, I may in the course of the day, meet with something to disquiet my heart, I will therefore in the strength of Christ resolve, that whatever trial meet me this day, to bear it with meekness of spirit. Were you thus to renew your covenant with God day by day, and go forth in the strength of the Lord God; then you would soon break the power of your pride and passions.

3. Set an *high price* upon quietness of spirit, and peace of mind: "Better is a dry morsel and quietness therewith, than an houseful of sacrifices, with strife." There is as much difference between quietness and strife, as there is between a stormy, dark, tempestous

winter night, and a calm, sweet, sunshiny summer's day. You soon know which to prefer of these, and why not give the same preference to a mild temper and a quiet mind? "A meek spirit, is in the sight of God of great price," and it should be so in our eyes also: for it is worth a great deal, it is a jewel of great value. Kings and princes may wear pearls and jewels worth thousands of pounds; but the meek man or woman, however poor, wears a pearl worth a world. Do you not find great benefit and comfort in this quiet and meek frame of mind, especially in times of trial and provocations? Never part with this pearl. What! would you throw away a pearl, because men throw dirt at you? What, if some revile and reproach you, will you on that account part with that meek and quiet spirit, with which God hath adorned your soul? Oh no, prize it too highly, ever to part with it on any account.

4. Remove the *occasion* of anger. When curious vessels were presented to the king of Thrace, he admired their beauty; but knowing them to be very brittle, he brake them, lest his servants should do so, and put him in a passion, which he was prone to fall into. When Saul cast a javelin at Jonathan, he departed instantly from his presence. It will be our wisdom to get away from the company of those that have offended us, lest our anger kindle, and break out to our sorrow and shame.

5. *Divert* your attention from what provokes you. It was no bad counsel that was given to a choleric man, by a friend, who said, 'Check your passions till you have time to count twenty, or go over the

alphabets.' When the mind is once diverted, there will be room to deliberate. The physicians will open a vein, to stop bleeding at the nose, by diverting the flow of blood another way; so those that are passionate, should divert their mind to cool their tempers. The grand remedy of all, is, "To set God before our eyes;" to look at death and judgment, and the endless eternity. Call the fire of love into action, to quench the fire of anger, as the light of the sun puts out the light of fire. Surely the fire of love to God and man, should at all times, put out the fire of passions towards thine enemy. Much may be done by diverting the mind in time.

6. Resist this sin of passion at its *first breaking out*. A little thing may quench a spark, before it breaks out into a flame; but if you stay awhile, buckets of water will not do it. Meddle not with contention. Take as great care to quench the first spark of anger, as you would to put out a spark of fire in the midst of barrels of powder. The fire of contention, though small at first, yet if not suppressed in time, will soon grow into a vehement flame. *Camerarius* tells us a story of two brothers, walking out in the evening, and the sky full of shining stars. One of them, being a grazier, wished he had as many oxen as there were stars in the firmament; then said the other brother, 'I wish I had pasture as big as the world, then where would you keep your oxen?' He answered, 'In your pasture?' 'What! whether I would or no?' 'Yes,' said the other. This led to a serious quarrel, which proved fatal to them both. The matter was very light at first, but was serious at last. Do we

not see many neighbours fall out about very small matters? Were some wise man to mediate in the beginning between them, how easily might they be reconciled? Otherwise, the fire kindles to such a flame, that none can extinguish, or make them friends again.

7. Be convinced, that it is much better to *endure wrong*, than to be sinfully angry for that wrong. In bearing wrong, Satan cannot hurt you; but if he can put you into an angry fit, he has advantage against you. Augustine saith, 'When the fowler has laid his nets, he throws stones into the hedges to frighten the birds into his nets.' So, when the devil has set his nets to catch poor souls in, he then employs his agents to injure their neighbours, to drive them to Satan's nets. Oh then, take heed of anger; take heed of the enemy's net, the other side of the hedge. Better suffer wrong from another, than to endure sin in thy own soul. But what am I to do, when I am injured? Look at God, and consider thine own offences against him; and see that you commit your cause into his hands, he will manage all for you. God overrules all the evils you meet with; then say with David: "I was dumb, and opened not my mouth, because it was thy doing." Thus Joseph looked beyond his brethren's barbarous conduct, and said, "The Lord hath sent me before you." Thus Job looked beyond the Chaldean's outrages, and said, "The Lord has taken away." And David looked beyond Shimei's bitter rancour, and said, "The Lord hath bidden him to curse." And when Christ Jesus endured all manner of cruel sufferings, at the hands of

his malicious enemies, he calls this, "The cup which his Father had given him to drink." Then learn to say under all injuries, "This is from God," for my good, it is the cross he has appointed for me to carry.

8. "Take unto you the *sword of the Spirit*, which is the word of God." Satan provokes men to anger, to prepare them for his own service; if once they yield to anger, they will yield to serve him. But that you may resist and conquer him, get your sword always ready at hand: he dreads nothing like the word of God. It is with this sword, you can slay corruptions and satanical temptations. Do you ask, how am I to do this? In this way:—

When Satan *tempts* you to any sin, and to any wrong temper of mind, such as, hatred, wrath, emulation, strife. These, and all such evil tempers, must be subdued, or how can you think that you are a true Christian, till these corruptions are mortified? "For they that are Christ's, have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts;" and this must be done with the sword of the Spirit. When you are tempted to any evil temper of mind, seek for the scriptures that condemn that sin: a belief of that scripture will arm thy soul against the temptation to that sin. Satan may try to persuade you, that you may be gracious, and yet peevish: holy and fretful; an angry Christian, and wrathful saint! Tell the enemy, that you can find no such characters in scripture. On the contrary, I read, "that they who are Christ's, have crucified the flesh, and its affections and lusts." Satan will invent thousand ways to make you believe, that

the provocations you have to be in an evil temper, will *justify* you. But go and hear what the Lord God saith to this, and mark the example which Christ hath set before you, that you might follow his steps, he cries: "Come and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart." There is your *pattern*.

9. Therefore, set before you the *example* of Christ. Imitate this example, till it affect your heart, and change it into the same image. It is reported of a very pious Earl, who was remarkable for a quiet spirit under all the injuries he met with, that his wife asked him, how he came to have such meek, humble and quiet spirit? he answered: "When any wrong me, I instantly turn to look at the injuries that Jesus Christ suffered, and continue to look at them, till my own spirit is wholly quieted. Does not Christ say to you and to me, "Come, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart?"' All Christians should learn this lesson well of their divine Master, "To be meek and lowly of heart."

10. *Pray down* the sin of anger, and earnestly beg for the spirit of meekness. Entreat the Lord to quiet and sweeten thy froward nature; pray also for heavenly mindedness, that you may not be disquieted with worldly cares. A heavenly-minded Christian, is not soon cast down with worldly troubles. Pray also for faith, "To cast all your cares upon him, who careth for you;" trust to him, who hath promised, "That all things shall work together for your good." God will turn the injuries you endure, to your benefit and advantage in the end. Why then would you be angry

with those that trouble you? If the wicked curse, God will turn their curses into blessings, to those that love and serve him. Pray also for love, which is of more force to restrain you from revenge, than any injury to provoke you to anger: "for love suffereth long, and is kind." Love will induce you to look on him who offends you, as your brother, whom therefore you must forgive, as you would have God to forgive you. Love will lead you to think of the unbounded mercies of God, whose virtues you must imitate, if you are his child; he forgives you, and forgives your enemies, and cannot you forgive them? You stand in need of infinite mercy, to wash away your many foul offences, and will you not let one drop of mercy fall on your brother, to forgive some trifling wrong against you? O pray for love, and pray for patience, and pray for the assistance of God's Spirit, to mortify your anger, and to sanctify your nature, so that you may serve God, and benefit mankind, and extend the kingdom of salvation upon earth.

CHAPTER V.

OF OUR OUTWARD CONDITIONS.

I.—*On* CONDEMNING *our Brethren.*

THIS is a very *common sin.* St. Paul blames the Corinthians, and St. James rebukes the Jews, for their extreme partiality for the rich, and their contempt of their poor brethren. There is a warrantable respect,

due to the aged, the gifted, the good, and the great. But we must not prefer the ungodly rich to the pious poor; nor shew more respect to worldly lustre, than to spirituality of character. But strong faith should be preferred to a gold ring; and true holiness to worldly riches. "For God hath chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom." "God filleth the hungry soul with good things, and the rich he sends empty away." The men of the world who grow rich in earthly treasures, are apt to despise the poor. What care they for the poor, they value their dogs before them. They too often persuade their poor brethren because they bear the image of the Lord Christ. They who idolize the world despise the poor both for their poverty and piety, when God esteems them as "The excellent of the earth."

II.—*The Christian's* DUTIES.

1. *Own* the people that fear God, let them be ever so poor in this world. "For God hath chosen the poor of this world to be rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom of heaven." They are the glory of God, the treasure of God, the portion of God, and his peculiar people. And shall we be ashamed of them that are the children of grace, because they are poor? What is this, but to be ashamed of Christ? for he accounts these as his members, and looks upon what is done to them as done to himself, and will say in the day of judgment, "Whatsoever ye have done unto them, ye have done it unto me." Oh then, be not ashamed of them, as you would not have Christ to

be ashamed of you. They are the treasure of the church and the glory of Christ, and on that account, we should highly value them. The pious poor are precious treasures indeed, for Christ dwelleth in them. What jewels so precious as those in whom Christ has his habitation? Then, for shame, be not ashamed of the godly poor.

When pious Lawrence was to suffer martyrdom, the tyrant that persecuted him, took him to be a rich man, and demanded of him to discover where his treasures were kept. Lawrence gathered a company of the pious poor, and said, these are the precious treasures of the church which I am to take care of, and in whom Christ dwelleth and reigneth.

2. *Cleave close* to them that fear God. "Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate." Jerome advised his friends to go often to the cells of the poor and needy. Rich men will associate with the rich, and also with the profane and debauched poor, that will flatter their vices; and they can be hospitable to the wicked rabble, when they will have nothing to do with the needy members of Christ. Alas! this is not the life of christians, but of heathens. One soul, be the man ever so poor, if it have Christ dwelling in it, is of far more value than a whole town of debauched profligates, and atheistical wretches. God's people, whether poor or rich, are the glory of the world. God speaks of all the rest as vile and worthless. "Thou, Lord, puttest away, all the wicked of the earth like dross." God's people are usually called in scripture his *portion*, "The Lord's portion is his people." Deut. xxxii. 9. His

treasure, his peculiar treasure, "Ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me, above all people." Exod. xix. 5. His *glory*, the crown of his glory. "Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God." Isai. lxii. 3. What! is it so? Are poor saints in such esteem with God, that he esteems them, as his portion, his treasure, and his glory! O then, how ought you to cleave to such a people, and associate much with them, whose society is indeed, the communion of saints.

3. *Delight* in these people, as those in whom God himself delights. King David said unto the Lord, "My goodness extendeth not to thee, but to the saints that are in the earth, and to the excellent, in whom is all my delight." Kings have their delights, and the poor saints were King David's chief delight on earth. No wonder, for in this he conforms to God, whose chief delight is in his saints. Hence some observe that the lion and the eagle were not offered in sacrifice to God; but the poor lamb and the meek dove were. The great of the world, though high as the eagle, and strong as the lion, are not regarded of God; but those that are contemptible in the eyes of the world are precious in the sight of God.—Then you should delight in those that are the delight of the Lord God.

4. *Do them good*, as the best and chief objects of charity. "Do good unto all men; but especially unto them that are of the household of faith."—There is a mistaken charity. If you are loving and charitable to all sorts of men, without distinction, it may get you a name and good report, and the praise of

men. But it is the will of God, that you should give a decided preference to the household of faith. These are they that represent Christ, and are indeed the members of Christ. So he will tell you in the last day. "For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat; thirsty, and ye gave me drink. I was a stranger, and ye took me in, naked and ye clothed me, sick and ye visited me; in prison, and ye came unto me; inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done unto me." The proud and wicked are not Christ's brethren. But the pious poor, the humble and meek, are those that he owns as his brethren, and what is done unto them, he reckons as done unto himself. Oh then, act towards these, as you would act towards Christ himself, for they are his members.

III.—*On the use of* UNLAWFUL MEANS.

If we are in adversity, Satan will tempt us to use *unlawful* means to relieve ourselves. Thus when Christ had no ordinary means of getting bread, the enemy tempts him to work a miracle. When Esau came out of the field, weary and hungry, then 'sell thy birthright,' said Satan. And so he did. When Peter was in a perilous situation, 'deny thy master,' said Satan, and swear to a lie. He did so, and soon wept bitterly, as Esau had done. Satan still saith to those that are in adversity and want, 'Thou must live;' thou must not send thy family a begging: thou must sell thy wares, though by lying, swearing, and deceiving. Time of necessity, is the devil's opportunity to

set upon us. Fowlers usually set their snares for birds, in cold winter days, when they can find no food. We see that both poverty and riches have dangers attending them. Let me not be poor, "Lest I steal, and take the name of God in vain." In poverty we are strongly tempted to distrust God, to lie, swear, or steal, or to use some unlawful means to help ourselves. Many a time have I seen a poor professor put to his shifts; and little do we know the strength of his temptation to do wrong.—To such, let me give my counsel.

IV.—*The Christian's* DUTIES.

1. Consider, that all good things are *beautiful*, when rightly performed. Therefore the godly man ever inquires, what is just and right. Not what may be gained by fraud, deceit, and falsehood; but what is right in the sight of God. "Better is a little with righteousness, than great revenues without right."

2. Consider, that when ordinary and *lawful means fail*, it is never necessary to use unlawful means. Do you say, 'I must live, and I must maintain my family'? You had better perish, than live by breaking God's commandments. If you die for want of means to live, you may go to heaven like Lazarus, and exchange a miserable life for a life of glory. But in saving your life by unlawful means, you lose your soul: where then is your gain? You had better starve than provoke God to anger, and go to hell. Oh, take heed, and be ashamed to say, that you found it necessary to break God's commandments, and send your soul to destruction.

3. Consider, that what is got with *ill means,* is got with God's anger, and the shipwreck of a good conscience. An hard bargain indeed! What if you get riches by a false oath or a lie? Surely truth and a good conscience, which you part with, are of far greater value. Oh it is a pitiful exchange, to part with our most precious jewels for dung and dross! "What is a man profited if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" Oh the folly, of getting a little wealth, by the loss of thy God, thy soul, and the crown of life! A good conscience is of far more worth than the whole world. Mr. Perkins relates a story of a good man, who being ready to starve, stole a lamb, and being about to eat of it, with his poor children, and going, as his manner was, to crave a blessing, he durst not do it, but fell into a great perplexity of conscience, acknowledged his fault to the owner, and promised to make restitution, if ever God enabled him. If ever thou repentest of sins committed, thus will thy conscience smite thee; but if thou never repentest, thy conscience will be like a worm, gnawing on thee for ever.

4. Labour to *live a life of faith.* If lawful means fail, as bread in famine; even then, "trust in the Lord, and do good, and verily thou shalt be fed." Yes, verily, thou shalt be fed. In troublesome times, "The just must live by faith" on the promises of God. Abraham did so when he said to his son, "God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt-offering." It may be thou art low, and can hardly find bread to eat. God can make a dry crust to nourish thee as well as richer food. If you cannot find lawful means, never

use unlawful shifts to help thyself. "He that believeth shall not make haste." Christ in his greatest necessities would not turn stones into bread to save his life. And wilt thou, in order to increase thy wealth, be guilty of oppression and extortion? Oh, recollect, "That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." The Lord would have us live by faith, and to depend on him in the greatest straits: for he is "God all-sufficient."

CHAPTER VI.

OF OUR SPIRITUAL CONDITION.

There are weak Christians, and some strong in the faith. Satan has temptations for each of them. The weak he tempts to errors, despondency, blind zeal, &c. The strong he tempts to pride, hypocrisy, presumption, and boasting, &c.—I shall here speak only of one temptation for each of these.

I.—*The* WEAK *are tempted to* ERRORS.

1. If Christians are but weak in knowledge, the deceiver leads them into some false doctrines, and persuades them that such are some precious truths of the gospel. If men are godly, he cannot seduce them into damnable errors; but he often leads them into very

injurious errors, to their loss and shame. When the deceiver fails to seduce weak Christians into error, he will try to make them question the truth of the doctrines which they have already received. And if he fails in this, he will try to shake and perplex them, so that they may neither enjoy religion nor grow in grace. The various opinions, errors, and disputes which are in the Christian church are very perplexing and hurtful to weak christians. What numbers of unwary souls have been entangled in these nets!

2. This hath been Satan's *great design* in all ages of the church, to raise up some impostors and notable seducers, to perplex and trouble the church of God. Having no comfort in himself, he envies those that have, and casts stumbling-blocks in their way, to disturb them in their journey heavenward. He presents errors to divert men from the truth, and destroy their spiritual enjoyments. Satan knows that glorious times are coming on the church; when the knowledge of the gospel shall be universal. Now the deceiver of mankind will invent many errors and false views of that glorious period, in order to perplex men's minds, and cause divisions in the church of God. When God is sowing his wheat, Satan is busy sowing his tares. The enemy is never so busy as when the work of God goes on prosperously. He hopes in the heat of the market to sell his own dirty wares. He now contrives to blind men's eyes with the light, and drive them on furiously till they are led in a winding way into his own territories. Errors are sown thicker in times of revivals in the church of God, than at any other times. And if men refuse to swallow these

errors, Satan will try to perplex their minds, and destroy their enjoyment of divine truths. No wonder if he prevails with weak Christians who know not how to resist his temptations.

II.—DIRECTIONS *how to resist these assaults.*

1. That you may be able to overcome Satan, take care that you clearly understand, and firmly believe, the grand *fundamental doctrines* of the gospel; without which, there is no heaven, no salvation. The ripest Christians must have daily recourse to the first principles of Christ's religion. All Christians must continually live on them, as their daily bread. The want of this knowledge, is the cause of much heresy, hypocrisy, and self-deception, which prevail in our day. Come then and be well grounded in these fundamentals. You have them in the catechism of your church, and especially in the scripture. When you are well grounded and rooted in the truth, you are likely to stand fast in the day of trial, and to ward off Satan's fiery darts, and to grow in every grace. It is our misery, and Satan's advantage, that Christians are so earnest about circumstantials, and so negligent about the essentials of religion, upon which the eternal happiness of man depends.

2. Take heed that you never spend your time and thoughts in *controversies.* The enemy hath not prevailed in any thing like to this. Controversies are fuel to the fire of contention, which is blown up by evil spirits. What fierce contests do we see about church government, and discipline! Different parties,

like foolish children, throw dirt in each other's faces; while the common enemy prevails and triumphs over them all. Those divines act like wise men who decline these angry controversies. It is recorded of Zachary Ursine, that when his enemies reviled and provoked him, he removed to a far country, rather than dispute; so that he might avoid brawling, and live in peace. None are so likely to fall into heresies as those that are fond of wrangling about trivial points. If the form of Church government had been as necessary to salvation as the doctrine of Christ, he would not have left one in the dark when the other is made so clear. All ought to avoid doubtful disputations, and to view them as the devices of Satan against the saints. One of the best books on this subject, is *Irenicum*, by Mr. Stillingfleet.

3. Get an *humble heart*, and a meek spirit. God reveals his secrets to the humble and meek. "The meek will he guide in judgment, and the meek will he teach his way." God will break his mind to the broken in heart. These are the men that will find out truth in controversy. Oh! what contention have we about the form of government in church and state! What firing, as enemies, upon one another, among the soldiers of Christ, till they appear more like Satan's soldiers, than the saints of God! They appear more like tempters to sin, than helpers in grace to each other. Oh that we would serve one another, and help one another in holy faith and love! Let us be ashamed of our iniquities. This would be the way to find out truth in controversies, and make progress heavenward.

4. *Walk* according to the truths you have received,

and when you are found faithful over a little, more shall be given you. When you act according to the light you have, God will lead you on, and reveal more of his mind unto you. We have a plain scripture for this: "Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded; and if any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you:" that is, as many as are well grounded, and walk in the truth, let these walk by the word of God, as their rule of faith and practice, and this will teach them to agree among themselves, and love one another.

5. Be much in reading and hearing the *word of God.* So Jesus directed the Jews, that they might be convinced that he was their expected Messiah. "Search the Scriptures; for they are they that testify of me." There is enough in the Scriptures, to keep us from errors, in all things necessary to salvation.

Objection. Different men put different senses on many parts of Scripture; how then can I know which is the right sense? To this I answer: Look at the occasion, connection, and circumstances, of what is spoken; compare one place of Scripture with another, where the same thing is more clearly expressed; consult the most approved commentators; cultivate an humble and devotional spirit, and pray much for the teaching and guidance of the Holy Ghost, to enlighten your eyes, and to guide you into all truth by the Scriptures. Cry in the words and spirit of holy David, "Open thou mine eyes, that I may understand the wonderful things of thy law." Should you, after all this, fail to understand some passages, you

may be sure, that this will not affect your salvation, for what is necessary to salvation is clearly revealed.

III.—STRONG *Christians' temptations.*

If Christians are strong in grace, Satan tempts them to *boast* and pride themselves in their strength of grace already received. Thus he dealt with Peter, when he made that confident boasting, and said to his Master, "Though all men forsake thee, yet will not I." And thus the enemy deals with too many in our day. Strong Christians in their right mood, do not openly boast of their strength: a man of grace could not do this; but in the hour of temptation, Satan may drive them to proud boasting, and many, as well as Peter, have yielded to the enemy in this very sin. Indeed, it is rare to see a great Christian, who is at no time too sensible of his strength, and too full of conceit of his own abilities. I have already spoken of the sin of pride, and given directions how to subdue it. I shall now proceed to give a few more directions for the same end.

IV.—*Consider the following* PARTICULARS.

1. Consider, if thou art conceited of thy strength in grace, that thou art in danger of *neglecting thy duties*, and in the ready way to despise ordinances, except some favourable preacher enters the pulpit. Such were the Corinthians, whom Paul reproved in this ironical style, "Now ye are full:" I remember the time, when ye were empty, and heard me with

gladness of heart, and rejoiced when I arrived in your town; but then you were poor and empty. "Now ye are full, now ye are rich, now ye reign as kings without us." Paul is now a plain man, he may go and preach to some ignorant people; but as for you, ye are above such plain babbling. Oh that we had no occasion to speak so to some who extol themselves above others, and conceit that they want nothing. Would to God, that such people had a little more self-knowledge and humility of heart. We may expect to hear of those that are lifted up in pride, that they are soon sunk into degradation, and become offensive to God and man.

2. Consider, that an high conceit of thy strength in grace, will make thee *too bold and presumptuous*. Mr. Gurnal tells us: "The humble Christian is the wary Christian, he knows his weakness, and this makes him afraid; with my weak head, saith he, I may soon be led into error, and heresy. I dare not dispute with such men, nor read their books." But the confident man is afraid of no poison; he thinks himself so established, that he can safely venture on the most dangerous ground. The humble will not trust himself with the company of loose characters, lest he should learn their wicked ways; but the self-confident will rush into places where the plague reigns, fearing no infection, till he is struck with death.

3. Consider, that a conceit of thy strength in grace, will make thee *cruel* to thy weak brethren, in their infirmities. Surely this sin ill becomes a saint. It is the Apostle's counsel: "If a man be overtaken in a

fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness." That thou mayest have this spirit, "Consider thyself, lest thou also be tempted." Why are many so sharp in their censures, but because they have too much of self-confidence, as if they could never fall? When Bernard heard of any scandalous sin of a professor, he would say: "He fell to-day, and I may stumble to-morrow."

Turn away thy thoughts for a while, from thine own conceited worthiness, and fasten them on thy *corruptions and infirmities;* upon thy deficiencies in religious duties, wants and weaknesses in prayer, omissions in trying to enlarge the kingdom of Christ, and many other feelings; and then thou wilt be so far from indulging self-conceit, and pride of thy own gifts and graces, that thou wilt find great cause for repentance and shame. Guard against spiritual pride to the uttermost.

4. Consider, that the strongest Christian hath *not his strength in himself,* but in the Lord Christ: "I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." As all the myrrh and odours of Esther's purification, her riches and costly apparel, were all given her out of the king's house; and the royal crown that she wore, was put on her head by the king's own hands; so all the purity and perfection, all the righteousness and holiness, all the dignity and excellency of an holy gracious soul, are drawn from Christ. He alone is the root by whom the Christian is sustained; the spring, by which he is replenished; the sun, by which he is enlightened; the garment, by which he is clad and covered. Whatsoever goodness, grace, or excellency

is in the Christian, he derives all from Christ, and nothing is his own. Paul was not ashamed to acknowledge his own poverty, and ascribe all he had to Christ, when he saith, "We are not sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God." So very lowly did the great Apostle think of himself; and shall any of us think highly of ourselves, and so rob God of his glory, and Christ of his grace? Every ray of grace proceeds from the Sun of righteousness; and shall the dunghill boast, because the sun shines upon it? Or shall the Christian admire himself, because the Sun of righteousness hath shined upon him? Oh God, forbid!

5. Consider, Christian, that the stronger thou art in grace, the *lower* thou shouldst be in humility. "The more holy, the more lowly." Who so exalted as Christ, and who so humble? We see in him, that the highest excellence, and the deepest humility go together. Some think, that great humility in a great Christian, would be counted meanness; but was there ever a character so eminent as the Lord Christ, and yet was there ever one of such a humble spirit in this world? Men are mistaken in this thing; for a proud spirit is the base spirit; and the humble spirit is the noble spirit. Humility is a grace, that puts lustre, beauty and glory, on all other graces: therefore, the Apostle saith to strong Christians, "Be clothed with humility." Humility is the highest glory of the Christian, and the chief ornament of every grace; it graceth all graces, and makes the Christian beautiful in the sight of God. Be thou therefore clothed with humility.

6. Consider, that the more lowly and meek the soul is made, the more it is *fitted* for all the duties of religion, and to make progress in grace. It makes him to profit by affliction, like the vine under the hand of the dresser. A broken heart, like the broken ground, is prepared to receive the seed, or like the empty vessel, ready to be filled. A deep sense of our poverty, makes Christ appear precious, and "the chiefest among ten thousand." Humility of heart disposeth the soul for every spiritual duty, and makes the yoke of Christ easy. The soul never thrives more, than when it is humble under the strength which God has given it: "He filleth the hungry soul with good things;" but when the soul begins to swell, it is time for God to stop his hand. If what God gives to feed the soul, goes to feed self applause, that soul will soon fall into consumption. "Proud hearts, and lofty mountains, are never fruitful." When a Christian tries to live on the old stock, instead of carrying on trade with heaven, to bring in more, he will very soon be in a state of bankruptcy. Oh, the difference between one that is lowly of heart, and one that is proud and insolent! When humble, he prays for strength; when proud, he prays, to shew his strength, that others may admire him; if God loves him, he will soon take away from him that which takes his heart away from God.

V.—*Of Satan's* SUGGESTIONS.

When his temptations do not prevail, he has recourse to these *injections*, by himself. He opens his

quiver, and sends out a shower of these arrows, and fills the soul with consternation and horror. These blasphemous thoughts which the enemy pours into our fancies, much against our wills, are terrible, and set all within on fire. These horrid thoughts come so quick and powerful, that our flesh, as well as spirit, trembles, till the soul is filled with dread of speedy vengeance.

But are the children of grace ever troubled with these black temptations and horrid blasphemies? Yes, and none more common. The most holy hearts are often most haunted with them. Satan seldom disturbs his own willing servants with these fearful injections, except it be to prevent their conversion, or to drive them to despair; he lets them alone in this world, knowing that he will have eternity to torment them in. The devil knows full well, that the children of God have already happily escaped out of his kingdom, and are beyond his power to destroy them; and that they will be wholly out of his reach to torment them in the world to come: he will therefore, to the utmost of his power, harass and distress them in their way home to heaven. I very much doubt, whether any of the godly are always free from these horrid and infernal injections of Satan. Such foul and fearful thoughts are put into their heads, as they dare not mention to their friends; they think, that none of the people of God ever had such vile and dreadful thoughts, as dart into their minds, they know not how. A very pious minister once said from the pulpit, "I would kiss the feet of the messenger, that would bring me the glad tidings, that I should never

more be troubled with degrading and blasphemous thoughts of Christ my God." A deep groan was heard instantaneously through the whole congregation, which seemed to imply, that they also had experienced something of the same bitter trial.

VI.—DIRECTIONS *to the Christian Warrior.*

Before we come to the directions, I would briefly observe, that it is very difficult, if not impossible, to *distinguish* always between the injections of Satan, and the workings of our own corruptions. I have, at different times, thought much on this matter, and few had more reasons for so doing: but I confess that the subject is still covered with darkness. We may at least suspect, that if these blasphemous suggestions come after conversion, and not before, we may conclude that they are from Satan, by way of revenge on the soul for departing from his kingdom and service. Again, Satan's injections are usually violent and sudden, and leave man no time to know what he is doing. If man resist and pray against them, there is reason to conclude, that the enemy has a great hand in them. It would indeed be very gratifying, to be able to distinguish between the injections of the devil, and the evils that spring up in our own hearts; yet it is far more desirable to know how to overcome these black temptations. Then let us proceed to consider these directions.

1. Let us *beat them back* as much as we can. Let us never consent or approve of them, and we are safe. This may comfort us, whether they come from Satan

or ourselves; and we should not perplex ourselves much in inquiring where they come from: let them come from where they may, if we hate and reject them, they are not imputed unto us; the rule runs thus: *that* only is ours which we accept and assent unto. "When I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it;" therefore, God imputes no more to us than that which we allow: what we do not allow, but abhor and reject, is no sin to us, but our cross.

2. Let us not stop to *debate* and argue the point with the tempter; but instantly bid him to depart. So did Christ deal with him, when he tempted him to fall down and worship him: Away! Satan! saith Christ. Let us follow this example; for we have no chance to debate with such a subtle sophister. He hath been, for nearly six thousand years, practising his hideous temptations, and his infernal policies. We are mere novices, and know but little of the devices and depths of Satan; if we then stop to debate with him, we are sure to be more and more confounded. Surely, it is far wiser to bid Satan to depart, than parley and dispute with him on any point. When he suggests evil thoughts to our minds, we should loath and abhor them, and cast them away at once, after the example of our Lord and Saviour; then the tempter will for a season depart from us, as he did from Christ. A very *pious woman* said one day to her minister, "I am so pestered with Satan's vile and blasphemous suggestions, that I have no peace of mind, nor comfort of my life." The minister gave her this advice: "When any of these evil thoughts

are suggested to your mind, take no manner of notice of them, but go on with what you have in hand, whether it be your worldly employment, or religious duties, and care not what Satan says to you; he is doing his work, and you must go on with your's, without ever stopping to listen to his blasphemies; for he was a liar from the beginning." After a few weeks, the said good woman accosted her minister thus: "Sir, the devil is very angry with you." "What for?" I followed your advice, and the tempter now lets me alone, to my peace and comfort." So let every tempted soul act.

3. During the hour and power of darkness, avoid *solitariness* and desert places, where Satan hath the greatest advantage for all his assaults. When Christ was to be tempted, the Holy Spirit led him into the wilderness, that Satan might have the utmost advantage against him. He attacked Adam, Lot and David, when he found them alone. He tempts in the public assemblies; yet none so much to his purpose as solitary places. When he possessed individuals, he took them into the wilderness; he is the prince of darkness, and chooses darkness for his work. I shall here give my own experience. I spent my time in very public places, till I was wearied with the envy, jealousy and discord I found among men, which made me go to spend the remainder of my life in solitude. But alas! I soon found that retirement is not free from temptations of another sort, especially Satan's hideous and horrible injections. I soon found that it is a mistaken policy, to leave society for solitude, for there the enemy has more advantage against

us; but if God in his providence lead us there, we may trust in him for protection and deliverance. If it be your lot to be very much in solitude, take care of a wandering heart; the mind, like a mill, will be ever a going, take much pains to give it a right direction. Strive so to spend your time in solitude, that you may say with Scipio, "That you are never less alone, than when alone;" or rather, with Christ, "I am not alone, for the Father is with me." No place so sweet or profitable as retirement, if time and talents are rightly employed; for there we have less interruption to our converse with God about everlasting things, and to our worship of him in spirit and in truth.

4. We must guard against *idleness*. Holy exercises, and the duties of our lawful callings, should occupy our whole time. Converse much with wise and pious persons: consult them, and follow their direction. Be often and fervent in prayer, that you may not be led into temptation: say to Christ, "Lord, rebuke Satan, and restrain his malice;" suffer him not to harass my mind with his fiery darts, or hellish blasphemies; or, if tempted, save my soul from sinning. Be diligent in thy worldly calling also, so that the enemy may not find thee idle, which is his favourite opportunity to ensnare the soul. Very *nervous* people, above all others, should have their minds constantly employed; for Satan delights to torment them with wicked thoughts, more than any class of men; because they, of all others, are the most likely to yield to his suggestions, and to think his injections to be their own sins. Good Mr. Gurnal says: that 'Satan lays his brats before their

doors, and they, in their simplicity, take them in, and nurse them for their own children.' If we give constant employment to our thoughts, we shall have no leisure to listen to Satan's suggestions.

If after all, we *cannot get rid* of these sad injections, let us not grieve over-much; but look on them as Satan's sins, and not ours. Let them pass as they come, without any great trouble; say to Satan, Oh, mine enemy, do thy worst, I am safe, having committed myself into the care and keeping of one almighty to save; God is my rock and refuge; and under the shadow of his wings will I hide myself, "till the indignation be overpast."

CHAPTER VII.

ASSAULTS AT THE END OF LIFE.

We have already considered the assaults of our enemies at *three* different periods of our lives, that is: 1. In childhood. 2. In the time of conversion. 3. In after life. And now we shall notice, the assaults at *death*, and shew how we are then to act.

I.—*Assaults at the* END OF LIFE.

1. If God permits, and in some instance, he does permit, some of the best of men to have their *fiercest*

conflicts at the end of life; the excellent Mr. Bolton says: 'That it is Satan's policy to conceal his most desperate assaults unto the last. He reserves his keenest darts, his most deadly poison, and his sharpest sting, until he finds us on our death-bed.' Another great divine says: 'As evil spirits are ever busy and restless in their assaults, so their last conflicts are generally the most vehement, when the soul is about departing for ever out of his reach. Cruel and cowardly enemies always take advantage of the weakness and suffering condition of those they wish to crush.' So does Satan deal with dying men; but the Christian is as safe as Noah in the ark.

2. I have often wondered, why some of *the saints* are not most troubled in death. We see many of them pass out of the world without any molestation; but it is not the will of the enemy to let them go free: God hath him in a chain, and restrains his malice, so that he is compelled to let them die quietly; God gives his angels charge concerning them, to guard them unmolested through the dark valley of death; otherwise, not one of them all would escape the enemy's fiery darts, while passing from time to eternity. Some of these Christian warriors, after contending with Satan and his angels all the way through life, have the fiercest encounters of all, when they come to leave the world. I shall now proceed to speak of some of these final conflicts.

3. There can be no doubt, that such a subtle enemy as the devil, has an endless variety of temptations for dying men. But our time is too short to fathom the depths of Satan; we can yet only guess at the variety

of the enemy's assaults on Christians at their death. A few of them are these:—Some, he drives to unfounded confidence; others, to distrust. Some, he fills with spiritual pride; others, with dejection. He persuades some that they are rich, and have need of nothing; and tells others, that they have no grace at all. Some, he fills with too confident assurance of their election; others, to fear that they are reprobates. Some, he fills with overmuch sorrow, through fear of eternal death; others, he so stupifies, that they mind neither death nor judgment. I cannot here attend to all these particulars, and shall pass on to speak of these *two* things, 'Presumption and despair.'

II.—*First, of* PRESUMPTION, *at death.*

Some may be tempted on their death-bed, to *trust* to the goodness of their past lives; they see, that their lives have been holy, that they have walked before God in truth, and with a perfect heart, and have done that which was good in his sight. Happy for those that can look back on such a life as this; it has the image of Christ upon it; such a holy life was the fruit of the Spirit, and preparation for glory; yea, such a life of piety, every Christian ought to lead, and to bless God most heartily, when he has given them grace to walk in the ways of the Lord.

But should the Christian, in reviewing the goodness of his life, *trust* to this in whole or in part for salvation, he is guilty of great presumption, which calls for repentance. It is our duty to attribute all the

good we have done, and the holiness of our character, to the grace of Christ, and to give him the glory of our salvation. If we trust to our good works, or rest on them for salvation, or pride ourselves in any thing we have done, we are guilty of high presumption, and rob Christ of the glory due to his name. After we have done all, let us say, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name be all the praise and glory."

III.—*The Christian Warrior's* DUTY.

1. Trust to nothing in *yourself;* for all is of grace. Whatsoever good you have done, or howsoever holy your life has been, it was not of yourself, but of the free gift and grace of God in Christ Jesus: "What have we, that we have not received; and if we have received it, why do we glory, as if we have not received it?"

It is related of Mr. Knox, that the night before his death, he slept some hours, with great unquietness, often sighing and groaning. When he awoke, the standers by asked him, why he mourned so heavily? He answered: "In my life-time, I have been assaulted with temptations from Satan, and he hath often cast my sins in my teeth, to drive me to despair; yet God gave me strength to overcome all his temptations. But now the subtle serpent takes another course, and seeks to persuade me, that all my labours in the ministry, and my fidelity in that service, hath merited heaven and immortality. But blessed be God, that hath brought to my mind these scriptures: "What

hast thou, that thou hast not received?" "Not I, but the grace of God in me, &c," with which he is gone away ashamed, and shall no more return. And now I am sure, that the battle is at an end, and that without pain of body, or trouble of mind, I shall shortly change this mortal and miserable life, for a glorious immortality.' Oh, that thus it may be with us, that God's grace may be all, and we nothing. "We are not sufficient of ourselves, to think any thing as of ourselves, our sufficiency is of God."

2. Rest not on any thing short of Christ Jesus; neither on grace, nor duties, nor holiness; none of which are to be trusted for a foundation. We must indeed hold them fast in point of practice and obedience; but it would be our sin and danger, to hold them fast in reliance and confidence. Do them, we must, but glory in them, we must not. We may remember, on death-beds, what we have done, and how holy we have been in obedience to God, by the grace of Christ; yea, we may go farther, and desire God to remember us, concerning them, as Nehemiah did, who said to God, "Remember me, O my God, concerning this also, and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy." He had done many good offices to the Church, and he desired God to remember him concerning them: "Think upon me, my God, for good, according to all I have done for this people." Yet we are not to boast of them, nor trust in them, nor expect to be paid for them: it is not *for* all I have done, but *according* to all: Christ will reward his people, "according to their works," they are the best evidences they can give of their inward grace.

But he does not give them heaven in the way of payment, as if they merited it by their works; no, our Saviour tells us, that when we have done all we can do, that we must confess that we are unprofitable servants. All the wicked are called, "Unprofitable servants," and are sent to destruction; and all the righteous can give God nothing. "Can a man be profitable unto God?" If thou be righteous, what givest thou him? or what receiveth he of thy hands? Then, take heed of resting on, or trusting to, any righteousness, or works of thy own; they are not the cause of salvation, therefore to trust in them is dangerous presumption.

3. We must *roll ourselves on Christ*, and Christ alone, for life and salvation. Bellarmine, the self-righteous Papist, went so far as to say: 'It is well to rely on works, on saints and angels; but it is safer to rely on Christ himself.' Angels are ministering servants, and are commissioned to do many kind offices to the heirs of salvation; but all the angels in heaven are not sufficient, without Christ himself. Faith, is not content with the presence and services of angels, except the Lord Jesus come along with them: for he alone is "our righteousness and strength." David in his difficulties saith to the Lord, "I will trust in thee." All the saints must say the same, for whom have we in heaven or earth, that can save us, but Jesus himself? We must not trust to works, however good, but in the Lord our righteousness. We must expect all from the pure mercy of God in Christ, "and have no confidence in the flesh." This act of faith is so highly pleasing to God, that he

engageth, that such a soul shall never be ashamed. A heathen could say, when a bird, scared by a hawk, flew into his bosom, 'I will not betray thee unto thy enemy, seeing thou comest to me for sanctuary.' How much less will God yield up a soul unto its enemy, when it takes refuge in the bosom of his love, saying, 'Lord, I am troubled with such a temptation, but I trust in thee; I rest upon thee, for life and salvation; O take me into the bosom of thy love, for Christ's sake; O enfold me in the arms of thine everlasting strength: I have no confidence in myself, or in any other, but thee alone; into thy hands I commit my cause, my life, my soul, my all; whether I live or die, here will I cleave and abide for ever.' O blessed soul! that acts in this manner, and rolls himself on Christ for salvation! He is for ever out of Satan's power.

IV.—*Of* DESPONDENCY *in death.*

When Satan fails to lead men to presumption, he will strive to send them to *despondency and despair.* This is the gulph that swallowed up many souls. If he prevails here, he gains his point, and makes sure of his prey; that he may prevail, he sets before them all the gross sins which they have ever committed, and all the judgments which those sins deserve. These are what he tries to fasten on their minds by day and by night: he saith to them as it were, Come, sinner, read here the character, and the number, and magnitude of thy scarlet sins; see the heinousness of thy transgressions;—and can these be ever washed away?

You know, that "no unclean thing shall enter into the kingdom of God." And canst thou hope, with all thy sins, to pass through those golden gates? "There shall in no wise enter into them, any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie." And standest thou not guilty of all these sins? What hope then canst thou have, of entering through those gates into the city? Come, despair and die; expect nothing but the wrath of the Judge, and the wages of sin, which is death eternal for soul and body. Satan knows, that when these souls enter into heaven, he can never afterwards trouble them, he will therefore torment them now to the utmost of his power.

V.—DIRECTIONS *to the Christian Warrior.*

1. Consider, that it is as easy with God, upon true repentance, to forgive the *greatest sins* as the least; and that he is as willing to forgive many sins, as to pardon one. His mercy indeed shineth more, in pardoning great sinners, than small offenders; as appears in the case of Manasseh, Magdalene, Peter, Saul, and others. "Moreover, the law entered, that the offence might abound; but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." What glad tidings are these to penitents, who cry for mercy!

2. Consider, that Christ is the *remedy* appointed of God the Father, to save sinful souls. If Satan then tells us, that we are miserable sinners, and must despair, we may answer: "That Christ came into the world to save sinners." A good woman that was

sorely harassed with temptations, said to Satan, 'What dost thou here, Satan? Art thou come to distress a servant of the Lord? I tell thee, thou hast no part nor portion in me; I am, and for ever shall be, the Lord's portion. What canst thou lay to my charge, when my God has acquitted me of guilt? "Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world!" The blood of Jesus Christ, cleanseth me from all sin, and delivereth me from condemnation. My heavenly surety hath nailed my sins to his cross, and atoned for them with his precious blood, and hath applied that blood to my conscience, and so hath made me free from sin and death.' By pleading these things in faith, she was happily delivered from her temptations, and began to rejoice in God her Saviour.

3. Many of the saints of God have reaped no small benefit by *recording* the dealings of God with their own souls, and looking over them in times of distress. Dr. Calamy speaks of a very good woman that had for many years written down her evidences for heaven. Before she died, she was for a time suffered to sink into darkness and despondency. By reading over her own diary, and observing the past loving-kindness of the Lord, and the sweet communion she had often enjoyed with Christ her God and Saviour, her gloomy fears vanished, and her soul began to triumph in her great deliverer.

4. Study the *promises* which best suit your trials and conditions, such as these: "Behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for you, that your faith fail not."

"I am persuaded, that neither death nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, &c. shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus." Rom. viii. "Having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them on the cross; and so through death, destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; that he might deliver them which through fear of death, were all their life-time subject to bondage. "The God of peace shall shortly bruise Satan under your feet."

The devil's rage is greatest, when his time is shortest, as the darkness is greatest, a little before daylight; but this is a sign that a calm is at hand. Dost thou say, that thy sins are as black as hell, and red as blood? Still the voice from heaven is, "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy-laden; though your sins be as scarlet, you shall be white as snow." Where is the sinner that can despair of pardoning mercy, while the voice from heaven is crying, "Let the wicked forsake his ways, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon; for my thoughts are not your thoughts; neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord: for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." Surely, this language of transcendent mercy is sufficient to cheer the spirits of the most desponding sinner on earth, who cries for mercy in the spirit of repentance. See, that the most guilty of all, is invited to the fountain

of grace: "Whosoever will, let him come and drink of the waters of life, freely." Will any, after all, cry, There is no mercy for me, because of the nature and greatness of my transgression? What! saith God, will you measure your sins against my mercies? You sin as a creature, and I pardon as God. Do not forget, that my ways are higher than your ways, as far as the heavens are higher than the earth. Desponding sinner, will not this suffice? Cannot all the riches of grace in God supply thy wants? Away with your unbelief and despondency together; honour God with faith, and he will honour you with salvation.

5. *Pray* earnestly, that the Lord may step in, and help you, by the power of his might. This was the way of the saints of old; I shall mention a few. Jerome speaks of two ladies, eminent in holiness, who prayed earnestly, that those envious spirits might not disturb them in their last passage, and were heard. St. Bernard, when he drew near his end, intreated his friends to pray, that the heel of his life might be so safe, that the serpent might have no where to fix his sting. Bishop Hall made this prayer at the close of life: 'Arm me, O my God, for the last brunt, and stand by me in my last combat. Make me faithful unto death, that thou mayest give me the crown of life.'

Should we be assaulted of the enemy in death, let us *pray thus:* '"Remember me, O my God, according to the multitude of thy tender mercies; blot out all my iniquities from the book of thy remembrance, for thy name's sake." Impute not unto me those

hellish thoughts, suggested by Satan, which I detest, and long to be delivered from. O Lord, cause the light of thy countenance to shine upon me; refresh my weary soul, with a sense of thy mercy; dispel the mist of this black temptation; rebuke the enemy, and restrain his malice. Thou art the God of my peace, tread Satan, I beseech thee, shortly under my feet; so that I may finish my course, with a quiet and cheerful spirit. Oh, plead my cause against all my enemies, and rescue my soul from these fierce assaults that sore trouble me: I am in heaviness all the day long, and my soul is exceedingly disquieted within me. O Lord, be not far from me, but come to my help, and strengthen my feeble soul, that I may conquer mine enemies, and triumph in thy name; then my soul shall rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of my salvation: "Who is like unto thee, O Lord, who deliverest the poor and needy, from the hands of all their enemies."'

6. "Above all, take the *shield of faith*, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked." Our faith in Jesus will do wonders, when we set him to fight our battles. We are not so weak then, in the hands of Satan, as Satan is in the hands of Christ. Then turn him over to Christ: say to the enemy, 'If thou hast any thing against me, go and tell my Saviour, and he shall answer for me, for he is my advocate, my strength and my Redeemer.' Do as the sailors do in the storm, they leave all, and flee to their anchors; go and do so also, flee to the anchor of faith in Christ, and he as thy pilot, will bring thee safe to land.

A story of this kind is told of a pious senator. When he was on his death bed, he fancied, that he heard one saying unto him, let me write down in order, all the sins you ever have committed. The dying man knew he had now to do with Satan, and he said: 'Write first this sentence,—"The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head;" then write all my sins under it.' The enemy left him and vanished. Does Satan try to drive us to despair of salvation? let us flee to Jesus, and hide ourselves under the wings of his mercy and protection, and there we shall be perfectly safe from all our enemies.

7. Mind the *witness* of the Spirit, in times past, or present. Sometimes when the enemy is most busy, the Lord steps in with his testimony, and stops the lion's mouth, that he can say no more. Surely this should be noticed by us. One Edward Gee had a sore temptation on his death bed. When a friend visited him, he was as happy and full of heavenly joys, as his heart could hold. He spoke for some time of his high enjoyment, so that his friend had only to listen to him, and give God the glory; but about two hours after, the enemy assaulted him with deep despondency and dread of death. But God soon enabled him to say, 'Away, Satan, away! thou accuser of the brethren, thou hast no right to torment me; for God hath justified me, and I know that he will soon bring down Satan under my feet.' He then went on and exclaimed, 'The enemy is conquered; I am nothing in the war, but God is all.'

The same Mr. Gee had another most bitter conflict with the tempter, which I shall give in his own words.

'I was praying to God, my merciful father, in Christ Jesus, for the main thing, viz. That he would perfect his work in my soul, and give me life eternal. In my prayer, I used that scripture. Psalm cxxxviii. 8. "The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me: thy mercy, O Lord, endureth for ever: forsake not the works of thine own hands." Then the devil came to me, and suggested thus. 'It is true thou prayest, and usest scripture as an argument in prayer, and thou sayest that thou believest. But God will shew mercy only to true believers; now what proof or evidence canst thou give, that thou art a true believer? Upon this, Mr. Gee was in a most woeful condition, and said, 'Now it was worse with my soul than any pangs of death: I was full of horror and amazement, and ready to cry out, I am lost for ever. I was the more full of horror, because I had said so much before of my assurance and joy to them that were about me. But this temptation did not last long, for the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, came into my soul with their united testimony, that my soul was safe in Christ; and God enabled me to say, 'Away Satan, away! thou deceiver; it is indeed true, that none but real believers can receive any comfort and joy in God. But see here, I have a three-fold testimony that I am a true believer. God, my merciful and heavenly Father, Christ, my most blessed and dear Saviour, and the Holy Ghost, my guide and comforter, bear witness together, that I am safe in the Saviour's keeping: therefore away with thee, Satan! And on this, the Devil's mouth was stopped, and my soul rejoiced in God my Saviour. After this conflict, I had the ful-

lest testimony of the Spirit, and more joy, than I ever had in my life. Yea more joy than I can conceive, or angels express. I tell this for the glory of God, and for the encouragement of tried and tempted souls. Go, and tell it to others, that they may know what to expect from Satan and from the Saviour.' So far Mr. Gee.

Should any of us be tempted as he was, let us act as he did: flee to the refuge;—then we may expect, like him, to obtain complete and final victory over sin, Satan, death, hell and the grave. Then we shall be released from the war, and enter into the joy of God our Saviour.

THE END.